

THE CONCEPT OF ḤUKM IN THE QUR'ĀN

AMMAR FADZIL

THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ISLAMIC AND MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES
FACULTY OF ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

-1999



**IN THE NAME OF ALLAH
THE COMPASSIONATE, THE MERCIFUL**

DECLARATION

**I, THE UNDERSIGNED, HEREBY DECLARE THAT THIS THESIS IS
WRITTEN BY MYSELF AND ANY REFERENCES MADE
TO THE SOURCES ARE DULY ACKNOWLEDGED**

AMMAR FADZIL

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All praise be to Allah and peace be upon the Prophet Muḥammad.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to my supervisor Dr Yasin Dutton to whom I owe much for his guidance, discussion, patience and tolerance.

I owe an inexpressible debt of gratitude to my beloved parents Fadzil b. Mohd Noor and Khadijah bt. Haji Ibrahim who were my first teachers and have constantly supported me, and to my grandmothers Hajjah Hawa and Hajjah Hindun bt Haji ʿAbdul Rahman al-Jarumi who encouraged me to pursue higher studies whom I miss very much.

I am grateful to the Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies of the University of Edinburgh for giving me a place of study, and to Professor Yasir Sulayman, Director of the Institute of Islamic Studies, Dr Carole Hillenbrand, Head of the Department, and all the academic staff of the Department for their hospitality and support. I also would like to thank Miss Lesley Scobie, the Secretary of the Department, for her kindness, and also the staff of the Main Library.

I also would like to express my gratitude to my sisters Huda, Muna ʿIzzah and Salwa, and to my brothers Aiman, Muhammad Faiz, Ahmad Fawwaz and Ahmad Anas, who gave their moral support, and to my nephews Shahid and Nabhan, not to forget my former teachers in Maktab Mahmud, Kedah, especially the late ʿAbdul Majid b. Idris who introduced to me the taste of the Arabic language and my friends in my homeland, Malaysia, as well as in Edinburgh, whose names are too many to mention. My thanks also go to Martin Whittingham and his wife Helen for spending their time to look over much of the thesis and offering many valuable suggestions.

This study would not have been possible without financial assistance from the International Islamic University of Malaysia. To it I am very grateful. My thanks also go to Prof Muhammad Kamal b. Hasan, now Rector of the University, for his invaluable advice.

Last but not least, I owe much to my beloved wife Nuurul Huda bt. Musa and to my children Anis and Mikal who have sacrificed their time to accompany me here and endured unpleasant situations as most of my time has been devoted to my studies. May Allah bless all the above mentioned and give them a good reward.

ABSTRACT

This study is about the concept of *ḥukm* in the Qurʾān. It follows a thematic method of analysis, collecting the occurrences of the root *ḥ-k-m* in the Qurʾān. Its concern is to explore the meanings of the root *ḥ-k-m* and its derivatives as they occur in the Qurʾān.

The thesis consists of two parts, based on the two main meanings of the word *ḥukm*. Part One, which consists of two chapters, discusses the meaning of *ḥukm* as judgement. Chapter One focuses on judgement by God, while Chapter Two centres on judgement by others. Part Two consists of one chapter (Chapter Three) and aims at exploring the concept of wisdom as signified by derivatives of the root *ḥ-k-m*. The thesis also gives consideration to other elements displayed by the occurrences of the root *ḥ-k-m*. It aims to collect scattered information and build up a picture of the meanings of the word *ḥukm* and their interrelationship with the other terms in the Qurʾān. The thesis is thus a contribution towards solving the ambiguities in classical exegesis with regard to the meanings of the word *ḥukm*, as well as correcting misunderstandings of the implications of this term in some modern scholarship.

TRANSLITERATION

ء (omitted at the beginning of a word)	ط t
ب b	ظ z
ت t	ع c
ث th	غ gh
ج j	ف f
ح ḥ	ق q
خ kh	ك k
د d	ل l
ذ dh	م m
ر r	ن n
ز z	ه h
س s	و w
ش sh	ي y
ص ṣ	ال al-, l-
ض ḍ	

The diphthongs are written: ay (أَيْ) (عَيْب)

aw (أَوّ) (أَوّلى)

The three short vowels are represented by *a* for *fathā*, *i* for *kasra* and *u* for *ḍamma*.

The long vowels are represented by *ā*, *ū*, *ī*.

The *tā marbūṭa* is represented by *at* when in construct and omitted at the end of the word.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
TRANSLITERATION	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	v
INTRODUCTION	1

PART ONE: *HUKM* AS JUDGEMENT

Chapter One: Judgement by God

A. Judgement by God in this world.....	8
B. Judgement by God in the Hereafter	18
C. Judgement by God in both this world and the Hereafter	19
D. Related Terms	23
E. Further considerations.....	60
1. Judgement as God's prerogative.....	61
2. Underlying reasons for God's prerogative of judgement	67
3. Types of judgement by God	72

Chapter Two: Judgement by Others

A. Judgement in accordance with the Qur'ān	77
1. Judgement by prophets	77
2. Judgement by the Prophets Dāwūd and Sulaymān.....	79

3. Judgement by the Prophet Muḥammad	85
4. Judgement by people in general	99
5. Judgement by the people of the Injīl.....	101
B. Judgement not in accordance with the Qur'ān	101
1. Judgement by wrongdoers	102
2. The <i>ḥukm</i> of the <i>Jāhiliyya</i>	104
3. The <i>ḥukm</i> of <i>tāghūt</i>	116
C. Further considerations	120
1. The integrity of judgement by others.....	120
2. Qur'ānic considerations of the application of the <i>ḥukm</i> of God.....	131

PART TWO: *ḤUKM* AS WISDOM

Chapter Three: Concept of Wisdom

A. <i>Ḥukm</i>	146
1. Meaning of <i>ḥukm</i> as wisdom	146
2. Related meanings.....	156
3. Further considerations	165
a. Preliminary remarks	165
b. Discussion on <i>bulūgh al-ashudd</i> and <i>iḥsān</i> as elements of acquiring wisdom.....	170
B. <i>Ḥikma</i>	182
1. The occurrence of <i>ḥikma</i> in the Qur'ān.....	182
2. The comparison of <i>ḥukm</i> with <i>ḥikma</i>	197

C. <i>Ḥakīm</i>	200
1. <i>Ḥakīm</i> as an attribute of God.....	200
2. <i>Ḥakīm</i> as an attribute of the Qur'ān	208
3. <i>Ḥakīm</i> as an attribute of every matter decided by God.....	213
D. Relationship between wisdom and power	214
CONCLUSION	218
BIBLIOGRAPHY AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ABBREVIATIONS	225

INTRODUCTION

...And We have also sent down unto you the *dhikr* [the Qur'ān], that you may explain clearly to men what is sent down to them, and that they may give thought. (Q.16:44)

For Muslims the Qur'ān is the eternal and uncreated word of God which was revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad, peace be upon him,¹ through the Angel Gabriel. Muslims are encouraged to devote considerable time to the Qur'ān and to extend their understanding of the Book of God. Thus, studies of the Qur'ān are, and always have been, of great importance.

One way to approach the Qur'ān is via thematic structure. In this method, the interpretation of the Qur'ān is not done verse by verse. Instead, the Qur'ān is studied by choosing a particular subject from among the wide range of subjects covered by it. This method seeks to determine the Qur'ānic viewpoint and thus to present the message of Islam regarding a particular issue. As such it is a medium for a better understanding of the Qur'ān and thus of Islam in general.

In reality, there are many topics and terms occurring in the Qur'ān which have not been considered in this way. This thesis looks at the concept of *ḥukm* in the Qur'ān as one of the key terms appearing in the Qur'ān. The reasons for choosing this topic are two-fold. Firstly, no similar work has so far been done, even though some relevant references can be found in various works. By this we mean that no systematic effort has been made to explore all the derivatives of the root *ḥ-k-m* and to study coherently their occurrences in the Qur'ān. Traditional works of exegesis have attempted to deal analytically with the root *ḥ-k-m* but have not done so thematically.

¹ It is recommended for Muslims to say this phrase - or its equivalent - every time the name of the Prophet is mentioned. In the rest of this thesis, its expression is assumed although not overly stated.

In other words, they have dealt with the root as it occurs in Qur'ānic verses in order to comprehend only its literal meaning.

Secondly, there are modern works which refer to the root *ḥ-k-m* but which do so without analysing the material carefully enough, thus producing an unsatisfactory result. The example is clear with regard to the meaning of the root *ḥ-k-m* as authority, that is, political authority in the sense of the government and administration of a state, and in the sense of having control over others. On the one hand, some writers use the verses in which this root occurs to denote authority, without any justification for this understanding. On the other hand, there are those who deny this meaning. Examples of the first are the various books going under the title *Niẓām al-ḥukm fi-l-Islām*.² Examples of the second are Muḥammad 'Amāra's *al-Dawla al-Islāmiyya bayna-l-'ilmāniyya wa-l-sulṭa al-diniyya*³ and Manzooruddin Aḥmed's *Key Political Concepts In The Qur'ān*.⁴ Among Western scholars, Rosenthal,⁵ for instance, discusses the word *ḥukm* together with the word *ḥikma*, but limits his discussion to its meaning of "wisdom". Although reference is made to this root in both the first and new editions of the *Encyclopaedia of Islām*,⁶ the articles

² This is the title of numerous books such as those written by 'Ārif Khalīl and Muḥammad Fārūq al-Nabhān. (See bibliography)

³ Muḥammad 'Amāra, 34-35. He denies that the root *ḥ-k-m* in any sense means authority.

⁴ Manzooruddin Aḥmed, in *Islamic Studies*, 10, 1971, 92-3. In this article he does not consider the word *ḥukm* in the Qur'ān to refer strictly to the political sense of government, but rather to arbitrary activities.

⁵ F. Rosenthal, *Knowledge Triumphant*. Cf. A. Jeffery's article on "The Qur'ān as Scripture" in *Muslim World*, 40:1, 1950, 106-134. However, he chooses to say that the word *ḥukm* means judgement instead of its meaning in some verses as wisdom. On the other hand, I also have tried to trace any other western works which seem related to the subject of this study. However, those works are regarded not related. They are such as Arnold's *The Caliphate*; Arnold and Guillaume's *The Legacy of Islam*; and Lambton's *State and Government in Medieval Islam: An Introduction to the Study of Islamic Political Theory; the Jurists*.

⁶ T.H. Weir, 'Ḥukm', *E.I.*¹, 3/332; A.M. Goichon, 'Ḥukm', *E.I.*², 3/549.

dealing with it (by Weir and Goichon respectively) do not consult all the relevant verses thoroughly and do not present a coherent framework. Indeed, there is very little reference at all to the relevant verses.

From this point of view, this thesis attempts to give a comprehensive picture of what the Qur'ān intends to say in the verses where this root appears. Its analysis is based on the occurrences of the root *ḥ-k-m* in the Qur'ān and seeks to understand their interrelationship.

The approach taken in this study is to examine this root to discern its meaning. In doing this, besides regarding the Qur'ān as the primary reference, lexical and exegetical works have also been consulted. The context of the verses also should not be ignored, for it is important for indicating the exact nature of the intended meaning of the verses. This means that an understanding of these verses should not be arrived at on the basis of the apparent meaning of the word but must consider the contextual situation as well. The occasions of revelation (*asbāb al-nuzūl*) are also referred to wherever appropriate, as well as the neighbouring verses which help us to understand the links between the verses and thus give a more vivid picture of them.

This thesis is concerned primarily with the concept of *ḥukm* in the Qur'ān; it does not attempt to compare it with the concept of *ḥukm* in the *ḥadīth* literature. This does not mean that the traditions of the Prophet are not important, but that the subject of this thesis is confined to an analysis of its Qur'ānic aspect.

Background to the word *ḥukm* in the Qur'ān

The root of the word *ḥukm* is *ḥ-k-m*. Its basic meaning is to prevent and to restrain someone from acting in an evil way. Thus it aims at producing good. The original meaning can be traced in classical Arabic poems, for example: "O sons of Ḥanīfa,

restrain (*aḥkimū*) your foolish ones: verily I fear for you that I may be angry.”⁷ Here the intention of the phrase “restrain your foolish ones” is the avoidance of provoking anger in the speaker and the gaining of his approval. The Prophet is reported to have said: “*Inna min al-shiʿr la-ḥukman*” which conveys the meaning, “Verily, in poetry, there is that which is profitable discourse [which restrains from ignorance and stupidity].”⁸ What can be understood from this is that the use of the word *ḥukm* indicates prevention of and restraint from evil and, at the same time, the creation of goodness.

According to the Arabic lexicons, *ḥukm*, besides having the basic meaning of prevention, also conveys the technical meanings of *ʿilm* (knowledge), *fiqh* (understanding), *ḥikma* (wisdom) and *qadā* (judgement).⁹ These meanings can be assumed to be related to the basic meaning of *ḥukm*, that is, prevention. Therefore, we can expect the technical meanings also to be inter-related by their implication of preventing and restraining someone from acting in an evil way, thereby generating goodness. It is our contention that all of these meanings relate to the original meaning of *ḥukm*, which is “prevention.”

In view of the different meanings of *ḥukm*, we can classify it as a *lafẓ mushtarak*, that is, a word that contains more than one meaning, which, according to al-Shamma, is one of the factors which complicates an easy understanding of the Qurʾān.¹⁰ Assuming that it is *mushtarak*, it might not have the same meaning when it appears in different verses in the Qurʾān.

⁷ Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, 12/141; Lane, *Lexicon*, 1/616; al-Baghawī, *Maʿālim*, 1/62; al-Rāghib, *al-Mufradāt*, 126.

⁸ Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, 12/141; Lane, *Lexicon*, 1/616.

⁹ Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, 12/140-141; Lane, *Lexicon*, 1/617.

¹⁰ Al-Shamma, *The Ethical System Underlying The Qurʾān*, 137.

The occurrence of the word *ḥukm* in the Qur'ān

The root *ḥ-k-m* and its various derivatives appear 210 times in the Qur'ān in a total of 191 verses. The derivatives comprise verbal forms, nouns and a superlative. There are four different verbal forms: form I, *ḥakama*; form II, *ḥakkama*; form IV, *aḥkama*; and form VI, *taḥākama*. The noun forms are as follows: *ḥukm*, *ḥikma*, *ḥākim*, *ḥakam* and *ḥakīm*. The superlative is *aḥkam*. As will be seen from our survey, the various uses of the root *ḥ-k-m* can be divided into two main categories of meanings, namely judgement and wisdom. A third meaning is prevention. The meaning of “judgement” and “wisdom” occurs many times in the Qur'ān whereas “prevention” is of limited occurrence.

This thesis is thus divided into two parts, which, broadly speaking, cover the two main meanings of judgement and wisdom. Part One consists of two chapters, and studies judgement by God and others. Chapter One focuses on judgement by God and explores this aspect of the meaning of the root *ḥ-k-m*. Chapter Two concentrates on the judgement by others and aims to analyse this aspect of the meaning of the root. Part Two has only one chapter, Chapter Three, which focuses on the root's meaning as “wisdom”. Its meaning as “prevention” is also included in this chapter because of its limited occurrence. An attempt is made to harmonise the different meanings of *ḥukm* and to arrive at the best understanding of its meaning in any one particular instance. Thus the thesis aims to provide both a more accurate and a more comprehensive analysis of the concept of *ḥukm* in the Qur'ān than is available in either classical or modern sources.

Note

All translations from the Qur'ān follow in general the 1984 translation of Muhammad Taqī-ud-Dīn al-Hilālī and Muhammad Muhsin Khan, King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur'ān, Medina, although with some light editing.

PART ONE
HUKM AS
JUDGEMENT

CHAPTER ONE

JUDGEMENT BY GOD

One of the important meanings that the root *ḥ-k-m* denotes in the Qur'ān is judgement. The subject pronoun of the verb *ḥakama* (to judge) mostly refers to God, which shows that God plays a major part in passing judgement. Its occurrences in the Qur'ān can be categorised according to whether the word refers to judgement in this world, or in the Hereafter, or in both this world and the Hereafter. We shall first consider some examples of the first category, that is, judgement by God in this world.

A. Judgement by God in this world

There are twenty-one verses which mention judgement by God on matters in this world with a total of twenty-six references to *ḥukm*. In general, the verb *ḥakama* in these verses means “to judge”. A survey has shown that when the subject is God, the verb in general comprises two groups of meaning: general judgement and legal judgement. General judgement refers to God's decision and decree, and legal judgement refers to God's laws. These meanings are understood not only from the apparent meaning (*ẓāhir*) of the text, but from the context of the verses. This section begins with Qur'ānic verses regarding general judgement by God. The most recognisable verses that contain this meaning are the following:

Examples Nos. 1 and 2:

Say: “I take my stand on a clear evidence from my Lord, but you deny it. I do not have what you are asking for impatiently. The *ḥukm* belongs only to Allah (*ini l-ḥukmu illā li-llāh*), He declares the truth, and He is the Best of judges (*khayr al-fāṣilīn*).” (Q.6:57)

Apart from him, you serve only names which you and your fathers have named and for which Allah has sent down no authority. The *ḥukm* belongs only to Allah (*ini l-ḥukmu illā li-llāh*); He has commanded that

you serve none but Himself; that is the eternal religion; but most people do not know. (Q.12:40)

The first verse refers to the Prophet's position in this world and expresses his inability to expedite punishment as his enemies challenged him to do.¹ This is because the right to send down punishment belongs only to God. Thus, the *ḥukm* of God happens in this world. The second verse deals with the concept of belief in God, which follows from the Prophet Yūsuf's proclamation that *ḥukm* rests with God. The basic meaning of *ḥukm* here is judgement. What follows the expression "*ini l-ḥukmu illā li-llāh*" is the command of God to worship only Him, which means that this command stems from His judgement. Al-Rāzī uses the word *amr* (command) for *ḥukm* when commenting on this verse.² This interpretation suggests that the phrase "He has commanded" explains judgement by God here. In other words, it could mean that the assertion that judgement rests with God denotes that command also rests with Him. Thus, it can be assumed that al-Rāzī is suggesting that "command" is a related meaning of *ḥukm* based on its contextual meaning in the verse. This is because the judgement which comes from God generates a sense of command. Al-Rāzī, in his interpretation of *ḥukm*, is followed by al-Zuḥaylī who attributes to it the meanings of *taṣarruf* (control), *mashī'a* (will) and *mulk* (dominion).³ Thus they treat *ḥukm* in its wider context without limiting it to the aspect of judgement. Their interpretations, therefore, provide precedent for discussion of the word *ḥukm* having broader meaning than simply judgement.

¹ Al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 1/305.

² Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 9/60.

³ Al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 12/265.

Examples Nos. 3 and 4:

And if there is a party of you who believe in that which I have been sent with and a party who do not believe, be patient until Allah decides (*yahkum*) between us, and He is the Best of judges (*khayr al-ḥākimīn*). (Q.7:87)

Follow what has been revealed to you and endure until Allah decides (*yahkum*). He is the best of judges (*khayr al-ḥākimīn*). (Q.10:109)⁴

Q.7:87 refers to the Prophet's struggle in his mission, to which he received both positive and negative responses. So, the Prophet abdicated his own will and left it to God to decide the fate of the two sides. The preceding verses refer to God's punishment of earlier peoples who disobeyed Him and His messengers. The punishment was imposed in this world. According to al-Bayḍāwī, commenting on Q.7:87, the decision was that God gives victory to the side of truth and not to those who are in error, that is, a good end for the believers and a bad end for the unbelievers.⁵ The second verse follows the same theme of the patience required by the Prophet in waiting for God's judgement on those who resisted the message that the Prophet was trying to convey. The *ḥukm* of God in this verse refers, as exegetes suggest, to the punishment of the unbelievers, that is the Muslims' victory over their opponents or God's permission to the Muslims to fight their opponents.⁶ This interpretation seems plausible, since this verse was revealed during the Prophet's time in Mecca, and the believers were only allowed to react physically against their opponents after the *hijra* to Medina. Thus, permission to fight the unbelievers is

⁴ See also Q.11:45; 12:67, 80; 13:41; 18:26; 21:112; 52:48; 68:48; and 76:24.

⁵ Al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 1/349.

⁶ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 6/619; al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 1/448.

considered to be a punishment for them as well as a judgement by God. As the Muslims are on the side of right and the unbelievers are in error, judgement by God will be in favour of the believers. Therefore, He is recognised as the best of those who judge because His judgement is fair, in that He gives victory to those who deserve it.⁷

From these examples it is obvious that the root *h-k-m* means judgement. When it is attributed to God it means a judgement by God which reveals His determination to act. Thus it includes the sense of His making a decree. As what He decrees is always executed, this suggests that the judgement by God in this context is a decisive judgement.

The next example demonstrates another meaning of judgement by God, which is a legal judgement, that is, His laws. It concerns disputes or His introducing a specific regulation. The examples are as follows:

Examples Nos. 5, 6 and 7:

O you who believe! Fulfil [your] contracts (*al-ʿuqūd*). Lawful unto you (for food) are all the cattle except that which will be announced to you, animals of the chase are [also] forbidden while you are in *iḥrām*.⁸ Verily Allah judges (*yaḥkum*) that which He wills. (Q.5:1)

O you who believe! When believing women come to you as emigrants, examine them; Allah knows best as to their faith. Then if you ascertain that they are true believers send them not back to the unbelievers. They are not lawful [wives] for the unbelievers nor are the unbelievers lawful [husbands] for them. But give them [the unbelievers] that [amount of money] which they have spent [as their dowry] to them. And there will be no sin on you to marry them if you have paid their dowry to them. Likewise hold not the disbelieving women as wives, ask for [the return of] that which you have spent [as dowry] and let them [the unbelievers] ask for that which they have spent. That is the judgement of Allah, He

⁷ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 6/619.

⁸ *Iḥrām* is a state in which the Muslim wears a special garment for the purpose of *ḥajj* or *ʿumra* and is prohibited from doing certain things.

judges between you (*dhālikum ḥukmu llāhi yaḥkumu baynakum*). And Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise (*‘alīm ḥakīm*). (Q.60:10)

But why do they come to you for decision (*yuḥakkimūnak*) when they have the Torah, wherein is the *ḥukm* of Allah; yet even after that, they would turn away. For they are not people of faith. (Q.5:43)

The context of the first verse is the obligation to fulfil contracts, regulations concerning cattle and the prohibition of hunting game during *iḥrām*. It implies that the action of deciding is God’s, that is, that God can do whatever He wishes.⁹ In this context, judgement by God refers to His legal judgement in which His laws are announced to men. This idea is illustrated briefly by al-Qurṭubī when he says that God establishes what He wants according to that which He wants (*yusharri‘u mā yashā’ ka-mā yashā’*).¹⁰ This is probably because such a judgement and stipulation from God can be regarded as His command to His servant. Therefore, the verb *yaḥkum* in this verse means “to judge” and “to make regulations”. Al-Khāzin interprets this verse as follows:

God decrees (*qaḍā*) to His creation what He wishes, which consists of making lawful or unlawful, and He imposes (*farāḍa*) what He wishes, consisting of what He wants to stipulate of His regulations which benefit His creation.¹¹

The second verse concerns the regulations stipulated for the believing emigrant women who came from Mecca to Medina. They were married to unbelievers, and so God revealed to the Prophet the law concerning the dispute over this issue. The last phrase, “That is the judgement of Allah, He judges between you”, emphasises that *ḥukm* here, which means legal judgement and regulation, is the only *ḥukm* preferred by God.

⁹ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma‘ānī*, 3/227. This is close in meaning to Q.2:253, which reads: “...But Allah does what He wishes.”

¹⁰ Al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi‘*, 6/26; cf. al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 6/70-71.

¹¹ Al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 2/208.

The third verse clearly states that the Torah contains the *ḥukm* of God. This verse was revealed with regard to the Jews who sought judgement from the Prophet. In fact, they did not intend to accept a true judgement, and so God reproached them.¹² Thus, though the verse is concerned with disputes, it implies that *ḥukm* refers to laws, for the Torah contains the laws of God for the Jews. Therefore, the *ḥukm* of God is clearly His legal judgement and laws which are applied in this world.

Judgement by God is illustrated in His revelation. Note that in each of the following examples the subject pronoun of the verb *yaḥkum* can be taken to refer to the divine Book.

Example No. 8:

Mankind was one single nation and Allah sent prophets with glad tidings and warnings; and with them He sent the book in truth to judge (*li-yaḥkum*) between people in matters wherein they differed. And only those to whom [the Book] was given differed concerning it after clear proof had come unto them through transgression one to another. Allah by His Leave (*bi-idhniḥ*) guided those who believe to the truth of that wherein they differed. Allah guides whom He wills to the straight path. (Q.2:213)

Ḥukm in this verse refers to the disputes which occur in this world, though the verse does not give any clue to the nature of the dispute. It could be, as al-Ṭabarī suggests, religious matters.¹³ Disagreement arises among the exegetes about who or what is the subject of the verb “judge” (*li-yaḥkuma*), and they allow three different possibilities:

¹² Al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 1/267; Al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 2/274. See also below, p. 91.

¹³ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 2/34.

1. The Book, that is, the revelation. This includes all the divine books that God sent for each particular period to His prophets. The book is judge because the judgement made by the prophets is based on the Book, and therefore the real judge is the Book, not the prophets.¹⁴
2. God, for the following two reasons: (a) He sent the Book, that is He judges according to what is revealed in the Book; and (b) in light of the phrase “and Allah sent the Prophets.”¹⁵
3. The prophets, because they judge according to the Book. The verb “to judge” is in the singular form because it refers to each individual prophet.¹⁶

Most exegetes claim that the first is the majority opinion (*qawl jumhūr*) among the scholars.¹⁷ To sum up these differences, we can probably assume that *li-yaḥkum* refers to the Book and specifically to its function as a source of judgement. This does not deny that God passes judgement because He is the One who sends the Book, nor does it deny the role of the prophets as judges too, because they judge according to the Book. These assumptions are based on the following arguments:

1. The pronoun in *li-yaḥkuma* normally refers to the closest noun or pronoun unless the context determines otherwise,¹⁸ and in this case the closest noun is “the Book”.

¹⁴ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 2/349-50; al-Shawkānī, *Faṭḥ al-qadīr*, 1/282; Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 2/146; Riḍā, *al-Manār*, 2/284; al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ*, 3/23.

¹⁵ Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 2/146; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 1/496; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 1/261.

¹⁶ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 1/496; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 1/261.

¹⁷ Ibn ʿAṭīyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 1/286; al-Shawkānī, *Faṭḥ al-qadīr*, 1/282; Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 2/146.

¹⁸ Cf. Abdul Raouf, *Studies in the Qurʾānic Concept of Sins*, 269.

2. After the end of the time of the prophets, the Book becomes the only divine source of judgement.

Example No. 9:

Have you not turned your vision to those who have been given a portion of the Book? They are invited to the Book of Allah to judge (*li-yahkum*) between them, but a party of them turn back and decline [the arbitration]. (Q.3:23)

The occasion of the revelation of this verse was, as narrated by Ibn ʿAbbās, when the Messenger of Allah entered a Jewish religious school (*Bayt al-Midrās*) to see a group of Jews and call them to Allah. Nuʿaym ibn ʿAmr and al-Ḥārith ibn Zayd said to him: “Of what religion are you, O Muḥammad?” He said: “I am of the religion of Ibrāhīm.” They said: “Ibrāhīm was a Jew.” The Prophet said: “Now then, go to the Torah, and it is between us and you.” They refused. Then the verse was revealed.¹⁹ According to another version, this verse was revealed concerning the Jews when a man and a woman from among them committed adultery. The Jews brought the case to the Prophet and he gave judgement that they must be stoned. They protested against the judgement and the Prophet decided that they ask one of them, ʿAbd Allah ibn Ṣūriyā, to judge according to the Torah. In the end the judgement was stoning, which caused anger among the Jews, so the verse in question was revealed.²⁰

According to these reports, the Book referred to is the Torah. Nonetheless, al-Ṭabarī produces a report on the authority of Qatāda that the Book refers to the Qurʾān, in which a group of Jews who were invited to go to the Prophet for a

¹⁹ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 3/217; al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ*, 4/33.

²⁰ Al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 1/431.

judgement refused to do so.²¹ These reports show that the verb *yaḥkum* here means “to judge” or “to settle a dispute”. Therefore, it also implies God’s laws as laid down for men, for the Book of God contains His laws.

From this discussion, we see that “judgement by God” yields two major meanings: general and legal judgement. These judgements include the decree and decision of God to do anything that He wishes. However, if we look more deeply at the contextual meaning of the above verses, the judgement by God includes a third meaning, that is, authority. What is meant by authority is the power to command others, and this meaning is apparent from the context of the verses.²² Thus, in Q.12:40 (example no. 2, p. 8-9 above), after stating that judgement rests with God, a verse follows containing the command to worship only God. Though the command proceeds from His judgement, it demonstrates the authority possessed by God which enables Him to decree anything. Hence, Q.12:40 implies that authoritative judgement belongs only to God, by which He commands people to serve Him only. Q.5:1 (example no. 5, p. 11 above) can be in the same way. The phrase, “Allah judges that which He wills”, itself implies the authority that is His. It means that God can decide anything for His creation and there is nothing which can prevent Him from carrying out His decision. Thus, the verse that follows it proceeds with His laws for man. Since all of these judgements must be followed, it shows the authority that God possesses, so that the verse implies that God rules what He wills.²³ On the

²¹ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 3/218.

²² For the various meaning of authority, see *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English*, ed. Della Thompson, 83.

²³ Rule signifies exercising decisive influence or having sovereign control over others. See Thompson, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English*, 1206.

other hand, the meaning as “authority” can be related to the basic meaning of the root *ḥ-k-m*, that is, prevention, which suggests that it can prevent wrong and decisions by others. In this context, authority is a related and contextual meaning of *ḥukm*.

The next two verses also illustrate the meaning of *ḥukm* as authority.

Example No. 10:

“Shall I seek other than Allah as judge (*ḥakam*) while it is He Who has sent down unto you the Book, explained in detail.” Those unto whom We gave the Scripture know that it is revealed from your Lord in truth. So be not you of those who doubt. (Q.6:114)

The word *ḥakam* occurs three times²⁴ in the Qur’ān, but is used only once to refer to God. A *ḥakam* is an arbiter who is appointed to settle a dispute. *Ḥakam* in Q.6:114, according to al-Rāzī quoting al-Wāqidī’s opinion, is the same as *ḥākim*. However, according to other scholars a *ḥakam* is superior to a *ḥākim*, because a *ḥākim* is one who passes judgement whereas a *ḥakam* is one who only gives the correct judgement.²⁵ This view is also held by al-Qurṭubī, who says that the title *ḥakam* is a great commendation.²⁶

The use of the word *ḥakam* reflects the pre-Islamic custom of settling disputes within the Arab community. The word denotes the person to whom disputing parties go for judgement. In the debate between the Prophet and the unbelievers, which entailed a dispute about his prophethood as well as belief in God, this practice of *ḥakam* was not applicable since God is the True Judge. There was no need to seek anyone else for judgement between the Prophet and the unbelievers, since there is no

²⁴ The other place is Q.4:35, where the word *ḥakam* occurs twice.

²⁵ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 4/134; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 2/432.

²⁶ Al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi‘*, 7/70.

authority above that of God. God had ruled that the prophethood of the Prophet was true and that the Qur'ān was clear enough evidence to prove this. What follows Q.6:114 are some laws, including stipulations regarding the eating of that over which God's name has been pronounced. Thus, the context of this verse suggests that *ḥakam* is someone who exercises authority over others. This authority enables him to produce regulations which suit the needs of the others.

Example No. 11:

Do they then seek after the *ḥukm* of the *Jāhiliyya*? But who is better in judgement (*ḥukman*) than Allah for a people who certainly believe? (Q.5:50)

The verse concludes the discussion of the *ḥukm* of God, which occurs in a section of the *ḥukm*-verses of *Sūrat al-Mā'ida*. The preceding verses denote, as will be discussed later, that the *ḥukm* of God, including His laws, must be applied to human society. The application of God's regulations includes a community's system of government, thereby enforcing God's authority over the people. Thus the context of the word *ḥukm* in this verse signifies authority and ruling.

B. Judgement by God in the Hereafter

The next discussion is about judgement which is passed in the Hereafter, the power of which belongs only to God. The Qur'ān mentions this type of judgement eleven times in eleven different verses.²⁷ Five of these eleven verses clearly mention judgement by God in the Hereafter, while the other six mention it indirectly. Four of

²⁷ These verses are Q.2:113; 3:55; 4:141; 6:62; 16:124; 22:56, 69; 27:78; 39:3 40:12, 48. This section will explore only two verses since the other nine verses give the same meaning for the root *ḥ-k-m*. However, the other verses are referred to in Section E. For example, see below, pp. 66, 70, 73.

the five verses that mention directly judgement by God refer to disputes that happen in this world. Analysis of these eleven verses shows that the root *h-k-m* generally means “judgement”. Judgement by God in the Hereafter is different from His judgement in this world. His judgement in this world lays down His laws, that is, religious codes of practice. However, His judgement in the Hereafter designates which party is right, which is wrong and who deserves favour or punishment.

Examples Nos. 1 and 2:

The Jews say: “The Christians have nothing [to stand] upon” and the Christians say: “The Jews have nothing [to stand] upon.” Yet they [profess to] study the [same] Book. Like unto their word said who know not, but Allah will judge (*yahkum*) between them [with regard to what they were arguing about] on the Day of Judgement. (Q.2:113)

Then they are returned to Allah, their True Master the Just Lord. Surely for Him is the judgement (*hukm*) and He is the swiftest in taking account. (Q.6:62)

The first verse concerns judgement by God in the Hereafter of the disputes between the Jews and the Christians in this world. As for Q.6:62, its preceding verses discuss God’s power to return everyone to Him, when He will inform each individual of that which he or she used to do in this world, while Q.6:62 confirms the return of everyone to God and consequently states that the power of judgement is His only. The last phrase “He is the swiftest in taking account”, deals with judgement and refers to judgement by God in the Hereafter concerning favour and punishment. Thus the judgement refers to God’s right to make the decision whether to favour or punish His creation.

C. Judgement by God in both this world and the Hereafter

The following verses discuss God’s sole right of judgement concerning matters in this world and the Hereafter. As such these verses show that judgement by God is

made in this world and the next. The difference between this judgement and the previous type is that the latter refers to judgement by God in this world and in the Hereafter, each mentioned in separate verses. However, the judgement that we are going to discuss is mentioned in the same verses. The following examples are the only four verses covering this aspect of judgement.

Verses Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4:

And He is Allah, there is no God but Him all praises and thanks be to Him in the first and in the last. And for Him is the decision (*wa lahu l-hukm*) and to Him you [all] shall be returned. (Q.28:70)

And invoke not any other god along with Allāh: there is no God but Him. Everything will perish save His Face. For Him is the decision (*lahu l-hukm*), and to Him you [all] shall be returned. (Q.28:88)

Say: "O Allah! Creator of the Heavens and the earth! All-Knower of the unseen and the seen! You will judge (*taḥkum*) between your slaves about that wherein they used to differ." (Q.39:46)

And in whatsoever you differ, the judgement (*ḥukmuh*) thereof is with Allah. Such is Allah, my Lord, in Whom I put my trust and to Him I turn in repentance. (Q.42:10)

The verses preceding the first verse are concerned with the Hereafter, and the verses following it refer to God's sublime power in the world. Q.28:70, between these two, indicates that *ḥukm* belongs to God only. Al-Alūsī and al-Biqā'ī refer to "judgement" here as a general judgement which covers everything.²⁸ Ibn 'Abbās interprets it as judgement by God of the obedient and disobedient servants.²⁹ Ibn 'Abbās's opinion refers only to judgement in the Hereafter. However, if we look at the phrases "the first", which could refer to the world, and "the last", which could

²⁸ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 10/313; al-Biqā'ī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 5/513.

²⁹ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 10/313; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 5/30.

refer to the Hereafter,³⁰ we can say these are praises for God which imply that He judges in both this world and the Hereafter. This shows a concordance between the praises and the rights of God, which confirms this implication. His judgement in this world refers to His decision to take the soul from man, whereas His judgement in the Hereafter refers to His bestowing of bounty and punishment.

The second verse has an ending similar to that of Q.28:70, "For Him is the decision, and to Him you [all] shall be returned." It can refer to matters in this world, from which it is the decision of God to bring everything back to Himself. Nonetheless, it can also be interpreted as referring to the judgement made by God and it results after everything has been returned to Him brought to the Hereafter.³¹ In these two verses, *ḥukm* refers to God's decision on everything, and this includes His decision to bring everything back to Him.

The third verse concerns the Prophet's acknowledgement of God's judgement. The connection of this verse to that preceding it is the Prophet's sadness about his reception by the unbelievers. It is reported that when the Prophet stood up at night to start his night prayer, he would rephrase the verse and pray: "Guide me to the truth in the matter of the disagreement by your permission. You are the One who guides whom you wish to the straight path."³² This indicates that the verb *taḥkum* here signifies "you judge" which refers to a judgement in a matter of disagreement. This judgement can result in punishment in both this world and the Hereafter.³³

³⁰ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 10/97.

³¹ Cf. Ibn ʿAṭiyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 4/304.

³² Al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 5/315.

³³ Abū al-Suʿūd, *Irshād*, 4/472; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 12/267; al-Biqāʿī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 6/457.

Regarding the fourth verse, the exegetes disagree about the meaning of the phrase “*fi-hi*” (therein). According to them it refers either to religious matters³⁴ or to both this world and the Hereafter.³⁵ Judgement belongs to God, and according to some exegetes this is executed in the Hereafter, where it consists of His bounty and punishment.³⁶ Nevertheless, al-Shawkānī says that it could refer to the Qur’ān for it contains judgement by God for men.³⁷ Quṭb argues that this verse refers to revelation, which is also the subject of the preceding verses. Thus “judgement” refers to the Qur’ān, for it contains the decisive word of God regarding matters of this world and the Hereafter.³⁸ This can mean that judgement by God is revealed in this world through revelation, which refers in turn to His judgement in this world and the Hereafter. The view of Quṭb seems more reasonable, for it clarifies the relationship to the preceding verses and resolves the disagreement among the earlier exegetes.

From this discussion we see that judgement by God in the Hereafter and His judgement in both this world and the Hereafter mean general judgement by Him. Nevertheless, the context of the verses quoted above implies God’s authority over mankind, that everyone is subject to His judgement, and He is the only one who possesses the right to favour or punish His servants. Thus, the contextual verses suggest that *ḥukm* means “authority”.

³⁴ Al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 5/375; al-Shawkānī, *Fath al-qadīr*, 4/506.

³⁵ Al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 2/359; al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 25/30.

³⁶ Al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 5/375; al-Shawkānī, *Fath al-qadīr*, 4/506.

³⁷ Al-Shawkānī, *Fath al-qadīr*, 4/507.

³⁸ Quṭb, *Ẓilāl*, 5/3137.

D. Related terms

In the previous discussion it has been suggested that the root *ḥ-k-m* signifies “authority” as well as “judgement”. The discussion cannot be complete unless the links between the other related terms to the meaning of *ḥukm* as “judgement” and “authority” are clarified.³⁹ If other terms related to “judgement” and “authority” are explored, they can be used to give a full understanding of the concepts of “judgement” and “authority”.⁴⁰ These related terms will be discussed in this section.

1. *Qaḍā'*

The word *qaḍā'* means the cutting off (*qaṭʿ*), completion (*itmām*) and finishing (*farāgh*) [of something]. Thus, *qaḍā'* is the completion of doing something resulting from a particular performance. In other words, it means the completion of something resulting in the cutting off and terminating of the action.⁴¹ The other meanings arising from this root are “to accomplish”, “to fulfil”, “to perform”, and “to decree” or “to decide judicially”.⁴² The last meaning is also understood as a definite decision. Another meaning denoted by the word *qaḍā'* is *ḥukm*, in the sense that both of them mean “judgement”. This is because a judge gives a definite decision by which he completes a judgement, and so he cuts off the quarrel between two

³⁹ Izutsu regards this method as a semantic field. See Thoshihiko Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts*, 156.

⁴⁰ Cf. Izutsu who emphasises that “the relational meaning is something connotative that comes to be attached and added to the former by the word’s having taken a particular position in a particular field, standing in diverse relations to all other important words”. Toshihiko Izutsu, *God and Man in the Koran*, 20.

⁴¹ Al-Rāghib, *al-Mufradāt*, 416; al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 8/20; al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 2/370-1, 10/18-19; Daud Rahbar, *God of Justice*, 97; D.B. MacDonald, ‘Qaḍā,’ *E.I.*, 2/603; G.Y. Kaldy, ‘Qaḍā,’ *E.I.*, 4/34.

⁴² Rahbar, *God of Justice*, 97.

parties.⁴³ *Qaḍā'*, therefore, encompasses various meanings, all of which relate to the basic meaning of *qaḍā'*.

These various meanings of *qaḍā'* are applied in the Qur'ān, and several Qur'ānic verses will be studied to explore this application.

Example No. 1:

In the Qur'ān, *qaḍā'* generally means “decree”, in the sense of the predetermined purpose of God. It also means a “decree” or “decision” by God and the Prophet as in Q.33:36, which reads:

It is not for a believer, man and woman, when Allah and His messenger have decreed (*qaḍā'*) a matter that they should have any option in their decision. And whoever disobeys Allah and His messenger, he has indeed strayed into a plain error.

Example No. 2:

The originator (*badī'*) of the heavens and the earth; when He decrees (*qaḍā'*) a matter, He only says, “Be!” And it is. (Q.2:117)

The verse refers to God's decree.⁴⁴ It deals here with the divine decision, which might be referred to as predestination, implying that *qaḍā'* deals here with the theological issue of predestination. Al-Alūsī suggests that *qaḍā'* here is related to the will (*irāda*) of God because will is the impulse of the decree to create something.⁴⁵

The following examples show that *qaḍā'* has different meanings.

⁴³ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 2/370-1.

⁴⁴ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 1/536.

⁴⁵ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 1/366; cf. Al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi'*, 2/60; al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 1/291.

Example No. 3:

And We gave information of our decree (*qadaynā ilā*) to the children of Israel in the Book, that you will do mischief in the land twice and you will become tyrants and extremely arrogant. (Q.17:4)

According to most exegetes, the verb *qadā* here effectively means “to inform and reveal”. In this context, the verb *qadā* is combined with the preposition *ilā*.⁴⁶ Its connection to the original meaning of “completion” (*farāgh*) [of something], is that in this case God informs the children of Israel about His decision which He has completely decided.⁴⁷ This indicates that the children of Israel have been informed of something that will certainly happen.⁴⁸ This implies beyond doubt that God knew in advance that the children of Israel would do evil actions on the earth twice, and so it is understood that the passage stands as “a record of God's foreknowledge of people's conduct”.⁴⁹

Example No. 4:

And Your Lord has ordered (*qadā*) that you worship none but Him and that you be kind to parents. If one or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of disrespect nor shout at them but address them in terms of honour. (Q.17:23)

⁴⁶ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 8/20; al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 10/18; al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ*, 10/141; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-Maʿānī*, 8/17; al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 15/20.

⁴⁷ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 8/20.

⁴⁸ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 10/19. Al-Bayḍāwī uses the phrase “And We revealed to them a decisive revelation (*wa awhaynā ilayhim wahyan maqḍiyyan mabtūtan*).” See al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 1/564.

⁴⁹ Cf. Rahbar, *God of Justice*, 100.

According to most commentators, the verb *qaḍā* means “to order and to command”.⁵⁰ This command, when referred to by the verb *qaḍā* in the sense of its original meaning, is a command that must be carried out.⁵¹

Example No. 5:

They said: "We prefer you not over what have come to us of the clear signs and to Him [Allah] Who created us! So judge whatever you desire to judge, for you can only decree [regarding] this life of the world."⁵² (Q.20:72)

The verse narrates the words of Pharaoh's magicians when they refused to continue to be part of his court. According to some commentators, the verb *fa-qḍi* here means “judge”, its verbal noun being *qaḍā*, which is similar in meaning to *ḥukm*.⁵³ Some exegetes suggest another possible meaning, that is, “to do” (*ṣanaʿa*).⁵⁴ This meaning possibly arises from the fact that judgement precedes action. Here, the judgement of Pharaoh refers to his threatening to put the magicians to death. If he had carried out his threat this could be considered as his action.

Example No. 6:

Now when Mūsā had completed (*qaḍā*) the term and was travelling with his family, he saw a fire in the direction of [Mount] Ṭūr. He said to his family: “You wait; I have seen a fire; perhaps I can bring you from there some information, or a burning firebrand that you may warm yourselves.” (Q.28:29)

⁵⁰ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 8/7-8; al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ*, 10/155; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 8/53.

⁵¹ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 10/54; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 8/53. Al-Bayḍāwī uses the phrase, *wa amara amran maqṣūʿan bih*. See al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 1/568.

⁵² *Fa-qḍi mā anta qāḍin innamā taqḍi ḥādhihī al-ḥayā al-dunyā*.

⁵³ Al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ*, 11/150; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 8/543.

⁵⁴ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 8/436; cf. al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 8/543.

According to most commentators, the verb *qaḍā* here means “to complete”,⁵⁵ which contains the basic meaning of *qaḍā* as cutting off.

Example No. 7:

Then He completed their creation (*fa-qaḍāhunna*) [as] seven heavens (*samāwāt*) in two days and He assigned to each heaven its affair. And We adorned the nearest [lowest] heaven with lamps and as a guard. Such is a degree of the All-Mighty, All-Knower. (Q.41:12)

According to some commentators, the verb *qaḍā* here means “to complete [the act of creating]”,⁵⁶ because the verse is describing God’s creation of the heavens. Another possible meaning is “to decree”. These two meanings can be related by connecting them to the basic meaning of the word *qaḍā*, which is “completion”. Thus, *qaḍā* here implies the completion of the creation of the heavens following their having been decreed.

Example No. 8:

In the Qur’ān we find the terms *ḥukm* and *qaḍā* used together in the following verse:

But by your Lord they can have no [real] faith until they make you judge (*yuhakkimūk*) in all disputes between them and find in their souls no resistance against your decision (*qaḍayta*) but accept [it] with full submission. (Q.4:65)

The verb *yuhakkim* is a derivative of the verb *ḥakama*, which in this context refers to judgement. Thus *ḥakkama* means “to make someone judge”. The occurrence of both

⁵⁵ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ al-bayān*, 10/65; al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi’*, 13/185; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma’ānī*, 10/279.

⁵⁶ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ al-bayān*, 11/92; al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 13/610-11; al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi’*, 5/225. Other commentators say that the verb *qaḍā* here means “to create”. See al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma’ānī*, 12/356; al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 2/350.

ḥakama and *qaḍā* in the same verse might have some significance. However, we find that in general the commentators are silent regarding this assumption. If we look carefully at this verse we see that *ḥukm* occurs before *qaḍā*, the first being used before passing a judgement, whereas the second is used afterward. It suggests that the decision made by the Prophet had to be carried out and that no intervention was possible. This is an interpretation of the basic meaning of *qaḍā* which means “the cutting off and completion [of something.]”. Schacht suggests that the first refers to “the arbitrating aspect of the Prophet’s activity, whereas the second emphasises the authoritative character of his decision.”⁵⁷

Another occurrence of *qaḍā* and *ḥukm* in the same verse is Q.27:78, which reads: “Verily your Lord will decide (*yaqḍī*) between them by His judgement (*bi-ḥukmih*) and He is the All-Mighty, the All-Knowing.” In this verse, we see that the verb *yaqḍī* refers to the word *ḥukmih*. Thus it can be said that *ḥukm* implies a definite decision, whereas *qaḍā* is its implementation.⁵⁸ If we consider the original meaning of the words *ḥukm* and *qaḍā*, we can conclude that once a decision has been made on a matter, then that is final. This definite decision is the only one which will take effect. Thus the word *qaḍā* is used to confirm the effectiveness of the decision (*ḥukm*).

Q.6:57-58 alludes to the same thing. Q.6:57 (see example no.1, p. 8 above) mentions that judgement (*ḥukm*) belongs only to God, and Q.6:58 says that if the Prophet had the power [to bring down the punishment] the matter would be settled [completed] (*la-quḍiya l-amr*). The verse reads:

⁵⁷ Joseph Schacht, *An Introduction To Islamic Law*, 10.

⁵⁸ Some exegetes define the word *ḥukm* here as *‘adl* (justice). See al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 12/235; al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 20/30.

Say: "If I had that which you are asking for impatiently (the torment), the matter would have been settled at once (*la-quḍiyya l-amr*) between me and you, but Allah knows best the wrong-doers."

The verb *qaḍā* is used to impart a sense of the effectiveness of the judgement when it has been passed.

From this discussion on the use of *qaḍā* in the Qur'ān, we see that this word has several meanings, all of which refer to its basic sense of the cutting off and completion of something. One of these meanings is judgement, which is synonymous with *ḥukm*, to the extent that both of them mean "judgement". On the basis of the close relationship between these two meanings, we can assume that *qaḍā* can be used to imply the restraining of someone from evil, that is, by means of a judgement. It also can deny the possibilities of other judgements. In addition, we can assume from the verses quoted above where the subject of the verb *qaḍā* is God, that it signifies the authority which He exercises in what He decides will happen.⁵⁹ Thus in the conversation between Pharaoh and his magicians (example no.5, p. 26 above), the latter assert that Pharaoh's authority is limited to this world, implying that in the Hereafter absolute authority belongs only to God. The following Qur'ānic verses give a clearer picture of God's authority.

Q.40:20 states, "And Allah judges (*yaqḍī*) with truth, while those whom they invoke besides Him cannot judge anything. Certainly Allah is the All-Hearer, the All-Seeing." This verse and Q.33:36 above (example No. 1, p. 24) in which the verbs *yaqḍī* and *qaḍā* occur, indicate the superiority of God in making decisions: Q.40:20 denies the validity of a judgement by anyone other than God; while Q.33:36 shows that men have no option but to bow to His decision.

⁵⁹ Cf. Kaldy, 'Qaḍā', *E.I.*², 4/365.

2. *Faṣl*

The word *faṣl* occurs forty three times in the Qur'ān. Its original meaning is “cutting off” (*qaṭʿ*),⁶⁰ specifically cutting off or separating two things from each other. It also means “judgement” (*qaḍāʾ*).⁶¹ This is derived from the basic meaning of *faṣl* in the sense that judgement in one respect is the cutting between two things, that is truth and falsehood. According to al-Rāghib, the word means the separation of two things until there is a gap between them.⁶² *Faṣl* can also carry the meaning of “explanation”.⁶³ In this context, the verbal noun *tafṣīl* is generally used. In the Qur'ān *faṣl* has several meanings which do not differ from those given above. All of them refer to the basic meaning of *faṣl*, that is, *qaṭʿ*. Some examples of Qur'ānic verses that employ the root *f-ṣ-l* shall be studied.

Example No. 1:

“Verily it is the word that separates (*qawl faṣl*) [the truth from falsehood].” (Q.86:13)

Faṣl in this verse is used with its basic meaning of cutting off (*qaṭʿ*). It indicates the function of the Qur'ān as a divider between truth and falsehood.⁶⁴ We can assume here that the word *faṣl* carries a meaning that is shared by *qaḍāʾ*, which usually refers to a judgement that separates truth from falsehood (*al-fāṣil bayna l-ḥaqq wa-l-bāṭil*).

⁶⁰ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 2/631; al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 3/496.

⁶¹ *Tahdhīb al-lisān*, 2/320; cf. Anawati, ‘Faṣl’, *E.I.*, 2/836.

⁶² Al-Rāghib, *al-Mufradāt*, 381.

⁶³ *Tahdhīb al-lisān*, 2/320; cf. Lane, *Lexicon*, 2/2406.

⁶⁴ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 12/540; al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 16/341; Abū al-Suʿūd, *Irshād*, 5/859; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 15/311.

Examples Nos. 2, 3 and 4:

The following verse employs cutting off and judgement as the meanings of the verb *yafṣil* from which *faṣl* is derived. Thus, in Q.22:17 we read:

Verily, those who believed, and those who are Jews, and the Sabians (Ṣābi'īn), and the Christians (Naṣārā), and the Majūs, and the polytheists, truly Allah will judge (*yafṣil*) between them on the Day of Resurrection. Verily Allah is over all things Witness.

In this verse the verb *yafṣil* denotes both “to cut off”⁶⁵ and “to judge” (*qaḍā*).⁶⁶ The cutting off is done to segregate two groups, believers and unbelievers,⁶⁷ or indeed divide those groups⁶⁸ mentioned in the verse. This division happens as a result of God’s judgement (*qaḍā*) of these groups. This judgement implies an element of decisiveness (*al-qaḍā' al-fāṣil*). Similar to this verse is Q.32:25, which reads:

Verily your Lord will judge (*yafṣilu*) between them on the Day of Resurrection concerning that wherein they used to differ.

Here al-Ṭabarī, for example, interprets the verb *yafṣil* as indicating a division between them according to His judgement, so that the judgement effectively causes a division between them.⁶⁹ According to others, *yafṣil* here means “to judge” (*yaqḍī*).⁷⁰ Another verse which conveys a similar expression is Q.37:21, which reads:

This is the Day of Distinction [Judgement], which you used to deny.⁷¹

⁶⁵ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 9/121; al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 11/251-2.

⁶⁶ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 9/124; Abū al-Su'ūd, *Irshād*, 4/12.

⁶⁷ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 9/121.

⁶⁸ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 11/251-2.

⁶⁹ *Yufarriq baynahum bi-qaḍā' fāṣil*. Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 10/251.

⁷⁰ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 11/136; Abū al-Su'ūd, *Irshād*, 4/304.

⁷¹ Abū al-Su'ūd interprets it as *qaḍā'* or *farq*. See Abū al-Su'ūd, *Irshād*, 4/405.

Examples Nos. 5 and 6:

Then when Ṭālūt set out (*faṣala*) with the army, he said: “Verily! Allah will try you by a river; so whoever drinks thereof he is not of me, and whoever tastes it not he is of me, except he who takes it in the hollow of his hand.” They [all] drank of it except a few. So when he and those who believed with him had crossed it, they said: “We have no power this day against Jālūt and his hosts.” But those who knew that they were to meet Allah said: “How often has a small group, by permission of Allah, overcome a mighty host?” And Allah is with the patient. (Q.2:249)

The verb *faṣala* bears a different meaning from those given earlier, for here it means to “set out”. Its verbal noun is *fuṣūl*. In this context *fuṣūl* is used to mean “to leave [heading to another place]”, which also implies “cutting off [a stay at] a place”. For example, al-Ṭabarī interprets the verb *faṣala* as “to set out [leaving a place heading to another place]”.⁷² Similar to this verse is Q.12:94, which reads:

When the caravan departed (*faṣalat*), their father said: “I do indeed feel the smell of Yūsuf, if only you think me not a dotard.

Examples Nos. 7 and 8:

And why should you not eat of that on which Allah’s name has been pronounced, while He has explained (*faṣṣala*) what is forbidden to you, except under compulsion of necessity? And, surely, many do lead astray by their own desires through lack of knowledge; your Lord knows best the transgressors. (Q.6:119)

In this verse *faṣl* occurs in the form of *faṣṣala*, which is different in meaning from the above examples. Its verbal noun is *tafṣīl*. Here the verb means “to explain” (*bayyana*).⁷³ Similar to this verse is Q.6:126, which reads:

This is the path of your Lord, a straight way. We have made the signs distinct (*faṣṣalnā*) for a people who let themselves be reminded.

⁷² This interpretation is implied from the phrase *shakhaṣa bi-l-jund wa raḥala bi-him*. Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 2/631.

⁷³ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 5/322.

In this verse the explanation of *āyāt* (signs) indicates that they come one after another, with none of them mingling.⁷⁴ Here too, *tafsil* does contain the basic meaning of *faṣl*, that is, cutting off.

To sum up this discussion of *faṣl*, we see that the basic meaning of the word is “cutting off”, and also that judgement is one of the meanings indicated by the verb *faṣala*. Thus, *faṣl* can be considered to be one of the meanings of *qaḍā'* when the latter signifies judgement. Nevertheless, the semantic relationship between these words suggests that when *faṣl* is used in connection with *qaḍā'*, the latter implies that the result of the judgement will separate two litigants. So again, we find that *faṣl* is one of the meanings of *ḥukm* when the latter signifies *qaḍā'*. This can be seen in Q.6:57.⁷⁵ First the verse says that “...the judgement (*ḥukm*) belongs only to Allah” and then it says that “He is the Best of those who judge (*al-fāṣilīn*)” (*ini l-ḥukm illā li-llāhi yaquṣṣu l-ḥaqq wa huwa khayru l-fāṣilīn*). The root *f-ṣ-l* is also used to signify God’s authority. This occurs when God is the subject of the verb *faṣala*. Q.22:17 and Q.32:25 (examples nos. 2 and 3, p. 31), mentioned above, refer to the judgement by God in the Hereafter. His authority will be displayed before His creation when it is all brought together in the Hereafter, thus indicating that on that day everyone will be subject to His judgement.

3. *Mashī'a*

The word *mashī'a* is a derivative of the verb *shā'a* and literally means “will”.⁷⁶ In this sense, it is a synonym of the Arabic word *irāda*, which also means will.

⁷⁴ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 6/570.

⁷⁵ See example no.1, p. 8 above.

⁷⁶ *Lisān al-ʿArab*, 1/103.

However, Lane quotes the opinion which says that *mashī'a* is fundamentally different from *irāda*; for the former signifies causing to be or exist, which is a synonym of the Arabic word, *ījād*. *Irāda*, however, signifies willing, wishing or desiring and is a synonym of the Arabic word, *ṭalab*.⁷⁷ This function of the word *mashī'a* is identified by al-Alūsī, who says that *mashī'a* originally refers to the creation of something.⁷⁸ It could be assumed, therefore, that *mashī'a* is “the will to create something”. *Mashī'a* in the Qur'ān is mostly attributed to God and generally means His will to create.

Example No. 1:

The lightning almost snatches away their sight; whenever it flashes for them, they walk therein, when darkness covers them, they stand still; if Allah willed (*wa law shā'a*), He could take away their hearing and their sight; Allah has power over all things. (Q.2:20)

This verse which relates to the will of God indicates that everything relies on His will and decision. It also shows the relationship between *mashī'a* and power (*qudra*). What this relationship really seems to convey is that God can do anything He wishes, there is no force above God that might stop Him from accomplishing what He wishes to accomplish.⁷⁹

Example No. 2:

Those messengers, We gave pre-eminence to some of them over others: among them are some to whom Allah spoke and He raised some of them in rank. We gave ^cIsā, son of Maryam, the evidence and supported him with the Holy Spirit. If Allah so willed (*shā'a*), those who came after them would not have fought against each other after the evidence had come to them; but they differed, some of them believed and some of them

⁷⁷ Lane, *Lexicon*, 2/1625.

⁷⁸ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 1/178.

⁷⁹ Rahbar, *God of Justice*, 70.

disbelieved, and if Allah had willed (*shā'a*) they would have not fought, but Allah does what He wishes (*yurīd*). (Q.2:253)

This verse clearly states that the quarrel which happened was connected to the *mashī'a* of God, and that is stated twice here.⁸⁰ It shows that the occurrence of an event depends on God's will, a point which is emphasised at the end of this verse by the phrase, "...but Allah does what He wishes", signifying that everything relies on His will. This also implies that God's might is insuperable and that when He desires something, He has the resources and the power to accomplish it.⁸¹

Example No. 3:

The following verse, Q.30:54, shows that *mashī'a* means "will". It is, however, connected with the knowledge and power of God. The combination of power, knowledge and will is indicated in this one verse. Thus, we read:

Allah it is who has created you of weakness, then after weakness [has created] strength, then after strength [has created] weakness and grey hair; He creates what He wills (*yakhluqu mā yashā'*), He is the All-Knowing, the All-Powerful.

From this discussion of *mashī'a*, we see that the Qur'ān uses this word to refer to God's will to create things where existence depends completely on His will. We also see that the Qur'ān relates this will (*mashī'a*) to knowledge and power, thereby indicating that knowledge and power are essential elements of *mashī'a*. *Mashī'a* is related to *qadā'* on the basis that the latter relies on the former, that is, on the will to decide and to judge. This implies that *qadā'* denotes the element of will (*mashī'a*) in making a judgement and decision. *Mashī'a* is not a direct but a relational meaning of *qadā'*. It can be assumed, therefore, that there is a connection between *mashī'a* and

⁸⁰ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 3/528-9; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 2/5.

⁸¹ Rahbar, *God of Justice*, 70.

ḥukm on the basis that the latter includes the element of will. The word *ḥukm* in the phrase “*Hukm* belongs only to Allah” implies that “the will to [produce] *ḥukm* belongs only to Allah.” This means that the idea of God’s authority to produce *ḥukm* is comparable to the idea of God’s will to create things. Therefore, the latter should signify God’s authority to create anything He wishes. The following examples confirm this assumption.

“And ordain for us good in this world, and in the Hereafter. Certainly we have turned unto you.” He [God] said: “I will inflict punishment on whom I will (*ashā*) and My mercy embraces all things....” (Q.7:156)

In this verse the statement of God - that the punishment will afflict whom He wills - implies that authority is important to ensure the carrying out of His will, for His will cannot be executed if there is no authority to support it. This means, in turn, that judgement, which entails will, is related to authority to ensure the effect of the judgement. As God’s word and judgement will certainly happen, therefore His judgement is related to His authority, and so judgement by God includes *mashī’a* and authority. The relation between *mashī’a* and authority is also implied in Q.28:68, which reads:

And your Lord creates whatsoever He wills and chooses (*yakhluqu mā yashā’u wa yakhtār*); no choice have they [in any matter]. Glorified is Allah, and exalted above all that they associate (as partners with Him).

The phrase “no choice have therein” implies God’s authority to do whatever He wills, which refers to the idea of His freedom to judge.

4. *Qadar*

The word *qadar* normally deals with the question of destiny.⁸² According to Ibn Manẓūr, *qadar* means “destiny that accords to a decree” (*al-qadā al-muwaffaq*).⁸³ It also means “a quantity or measure [of something]” (*miqyās*).⁸³ The use of *qadar* in the Qur’ān is mostly related to God and mostly means that “God fixes a destiny and measure or quantity”. It can also indicate power in the sense of demonstrating God’s capability to do something.⁸⁴ This section investigates the meaning of *qadar* as used in the Qur’ān.⁸⁵

Qadar appears frequently in the Qur’ān. Sometimes *qadr* is used instead of *qadar*, indeed it is said that both words have the same meaning.⁸⁶

Example No. 1:

The first verse to consider is Q.10:5, which reads:

It is He who made the sun a shining thing and the moon light and has decreed (*qaddara*) for it stages that you may know the number of the years, and the reckoning [of time]. Allah did not create this but in truth. He explains the signs in detail for people who know.

The verb *qaddara*, the verbal noun of which is *taqdīr*, refers in this verse to the decree by which God has determined the phases of the moon. Most commentators retain the verb *qaddara* without giving its definition, and some use the verb *qaḍā*. In

⁸² MacDonald, Duncan B., *Development of Muslim Theology, Jurisprudence and Constitutional Theory*, 28.

⁸³ *Tahdhīb al-lisān*, 2/361; cf. Rahbar, *God of Justice*, 108.

⁸⁴ *Tahdhīb al-lisān*, 2/361.

⁸⁵ This section excludes the meaning of power, as used, for example in Q.6:37: which reads: “...Say: ‘Allah is certainly able [has power] (*qādir*) to send down a sign...’”

⁸⁶ For example see, *Tahdhīb al-lisān*, 2/361.

this situation, *qaddara* is affiliated to *qadā*. They also suggest that *qaddara* means “to form” (*hayya'a*), from the root *h-y-*.⁸⁷ Another meaning of *qaddara* in this verse as suggested by exegetes, is “to transfer to a new form” (*ṣayyara*), its verbal noun being *taṣyīr*, that is in a sense of gaining a new image.⁸⁸ Although all three meanings are possible here, it seems that *qaddara* implies the aspect of decree and determination by God, and in this case, since *qaddara* proceeds from God, it implies a divine decree. However, if this decree is related to the meaning of *qadar* as a measure, we then define *qaddara* in this verse as “decreed according to a measure”. This interpretation seems preferable because not only does it combine two important elements of *qadar* [decree and measure] but it is also appropriate in the context of this verse, which speaks of the phases and order of the sun and moon.

Example No. 2:

The commentators relate the meaning of *qaddara* in Q.10:5 to Q.36:38-39, which reads:

And the sun runs on its fixed course (*mustaqarr*) that is the decree of the Sublime, the all-Knowing. And the moon; We have decreed [for] it (*qaddarnāh*) mansions, until it returns like the old dried curved date stalk.

The verb *qaddarnāh* has the same meaning as in Q.10:5, and therefore, *qaddara* means “decreed according to a measure”.

⁸⁷ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 6/532; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 6/67.

⁸⁸ Abū al-Su'ūd, *Irshād*, 2/446.

Example No. 3:

The following verses use the same meaning for *qadar*. Thus, we read in Q.33:38:

There is no blame on the Prophet in the matter in that which Allah has made legal for him. That has been Allah's way with those who have passed away before and the command of Allah is a decree determined (*wa kāna amru llāhi qadāran maqdūran*).

Most commentators interpret *qadar* here as *qaḍā'*, and so they consider these words to be synonyms where they express God's decree and decision. Al-Alūsī, for example, says that the meaning of *qadar* in the context of *qaḍā'* is a predetermined will which is related to the present state of something. It can also mean the creation of something based on a certain measure. Some exegetes try to differentiate between *qaḍā'* and *qadar*. What can be summarised from their arguments is that *qaḍā'* is what has been decided from the very beginning (*azalī*), and *qadar* is what follows *qaḍā'*.⁸⁹ Al-Rāzī makes the same comment but with the additional point that *qaḍā'* is something which happens, the significance of which the human mind can grasp, whereas *qadar* is what the mind fails to grasp.⁹⁰ However, if we look at the literal meaning of *qaḍā'* and *qadar* we can discern the difference between them. The former is decisive, denoting "cutting off," the latter denotes measurement, but both are interdependent in playing an effective role in any act. Therefore the phrase *wa kāna amru llāhi qadāran maqdūran*, which refers to this interdependence, can be translated as "the command of God which accords to its measure and definitely happens". This assumption is comparable to what al-Rāghib says in his *Mufradāt*. According to him, *qaḍā'* is more specific than *qadar*: *qadar* is a measure and *qaḍā'*

⁸⁹ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 11/206.

⁹⁰ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 12/599.

is cutting off. He quotes that Abū ʿUbayda said to the caliph ʿUmar: “Are you running away from *qaḍāʾ*?” ʿUmar replied: “I am fleeing from the *qaḍāʾ* of Allah to His *qadar*.” This means that one can hope that God may cancel *qaḍāʾ* as long as it has not been measured but if *qadaʾ* has been measured there is no way to cancel it.⁹¹

The following verses illustrate the meaning of the word *qadar* as “measure”.

Examples Nos. 4 and 5:

He sends down water from the sky, and valleys (*wādis*) flow according to their measure (*qadar*), and the flood bears away the foam that mounts up to the surface and also from that [ore] which they heat in fire to make ornament or utensils, rises a foam like unto it... (Q.13:17)

The commentators agree that *qadar* in this verse means “measure”.⁹² Similarly is:

There is not a thing but with Us are the store thereof. And We send it not down except in known measure (*bi-qadar maʿlūm*). (Q.15:21)⁹³

Example No. 7:

The following verse shows us the possibility of two meanings of *qadar*. In Q.20:40, *qadar* deals with the specified time decreed by God for the Prophet Mūsā.

The verse reads:

When your sister was walking and saying: “Shall I direct you to one who will take charge of him?” So We returned you to your mother that she might cool her eyes and she should not grieve. Then you did kill a person, and We saved you from great distress and tested you with a heavy trial. Then you stayed a number of years with the people of Midian (Madyan), then you did come according to a decree (*qadar*), O Mūsā.

⁹¹ Al-Rāghib, *al-Mufradāt*, 407.

⁹² Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 7/368; al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 9/228; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 7/123.

⁹³ See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 7/503.

Qadar in this verse means “a certain point in time” decreed by God. However, there is another possible meaning of *qadar*, that is, “a measure” (*miqdār*), especially a measure of time which is determined by God.⁹⁴ There seems to be a minor difference between these meanings, but they both convey the idea of time being preordained. We suggest that here *qadar* is the decree of God concerning measurements of time.⁹⁵

To sum up, we see that *qadar* has the basic meaning of “measurement”. The idea of decree is employed in the Qur’ān when the active subject of *qadar* is God. The inclusion of decree as a meaning of *qadar* should be associated with measurement, in which *qaddara* means “to decree according to a measure”. So we can say that *qaḍā’* contains an element of *qadar*, in that the former is made according to its measure. *Qadar* is related to *ḥukm* through the latter’s meaning as *qaḍā’*. This fact suggests that *ḥukm* is made according to the measure dictated by it. Hence the phrase “*ḥukm* belongs only to Allah” includes the sense of the measure of *ḥukm* belonging to God. On the other hand, when the subject of the verb *qaddara* is God, the verb implies the authority of God. It can be assumed that judgement, since it includes the concept of authority, incorporates authority to measure the thing in question. Q.25:2 is probably the best example demonstrating this assumption. The verse reads:

He to Whom belongs the dominion (*mulk*) of the Heavens and the earth, and Who has begotten no son and for Whom there is no partner in the dominion. He has created everything, and has measured it exactly according to its due measurements (*fa-qaddarahū taqḍīran*).

The verse starts with the statement of God’s authority and follows with an affirmation of His power to create and consequently to determine the measure of

⁹⁴ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 10/608; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma‘ānī*, 8/506.

⁹⁵ Cf. Abdul Raouf, *Studies in The Qur’ānic Concept of Sin*, 209.

things. It implies God's judgement to create which includes the determining of the measure of the object of the judgement, implying that judgement determines not just the existence of the created things but also its physical size. Since this verse indicates God's authority, it implies His authority of measuring the thing. Another verse: "We have decreed (*qaddarnā*) death to you all, and We are not outstripped" (Q.56:60), states God's power to decree death. If God's authority of *ḥukm* includes authority to decree death, then this emphasises that *ḥukm* includes authority of measurement, in this case measuring the duration of life.

5. *Mulk*

The verb *malaka* and its derivatives appear in the Qur'ān 118 times, excluding the words *malak* and *malā'ika*. It has several meanings but the underlying sense is "possession" or "property". Other meanings include "dominion", "lordship", "sovereignty", "rule" and "kingdom", yielding the meaning of "authority". Thus it is similar to the term *sulṭān*, which denotes authority over others. There are two words dealing with the concept of *mulk* which are also derivatives of *malaka*: *milk* and *malk*. According to Ibn Manẓūr, *mulk*, *malk* and *milk* all imply possession of something and power.⁹⁶ As for *mulk*, it is well known as meaning "sovereignty" and "dominion" (*sulṭān*),⁹⁷ and *mālik* (king) denotes someone who possesses absolute power of administration in a community. According to al-Rāghib, *mulk* is having the power to exercise command or authority.⁹⁸ He considers *milk* to be a synonym of

⁹⁶ *Tahdhīb al-lisān*, 2/573.

⁹⁷ *Tahdhīb al-lisān*, 2/573; cf. M. Plessner, 'Mulk', *E.I.*, 2/7546.

⁹⁸ *Al-Mufradāt*, 472; cf. Lane, *Lexicon*, 2/3028.

mulk when he states that *milk* is of two types: possession and power of management; and possession regardless of whether there is power of management or not.⁹⁹ Here we see that these words [*mulk*, *milk*, and *malk*] are based on the meaning of “possession”, and ancillary to this is the meaning of “power” because a possessor can show his absolute authority over his property only when he has power.

In this section, some Qur’ānic verses will be investigated to discern the meaning of *mulk*.

Example No. 1:

And they followed what the Satans used to recite [gave out falsely of the magic] in the reign (*mulk*) of Sulaymān, Sulaymān did not disbelieve, but the Satans disbelieved, teaching the people magic and what had been sent down in Babylon (Bābil) to the two angels, Hārūt and Mārūt; they do not teach anyone without first saying: “We are only for trial, so do not disbelieve”; so they learn from them by which they separate man and wife; but they do not harm anyone except by the permission of Allah; and they learn what harms them and does not profit them. And indeed they knew that he who buys it has no share in the Hereafter. And how bad indeed was that for which they sold their own selves if they had known. (Q.2:102)

Mulk refers to the period of the reign of the Prophet Sulaymān. Most commentators do not comment on the meaning of *mulk*, but retain the original word *mulk* in their commentaries,¹⁰⁰ thereby implying that its meaning is well known to everyone. Since this verse deals with the kingship of the Prophet Sulaymān, it certainly suggests that *mulk* means “kingdom” in the sense of “reign”, in which it includes the meaning of sovereignty, power and dominion.

⁹⁹ *Al-Mufradāt*, 472.

¹⁰⁰ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 1/493; Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 2/278.

Example No. 2:

The following verse maintains the same idea of *mulk*. We read in Q.2:107:

Do you not know that to Allah belongs the dominion (*mulk*) of the heavens and the earth? And besides Allah you have neither protector nor helper.

This verse asserts the sovereignty of God in the heavens and on the earth. Al-Ṭabarī interprets *mulk* here as “dominion”, “power” (*sulṭān*) and “kingdom” (*mamlaka*), though he excludes its meaning of *milk* (possession, that is, of property).¹⁰¹ *Mulk* also denotes powerful dominance (*al-sulṭān al-qāhir*) and brilliant commanding (*al-istilā al-bāhir*), which in turn refer to complete power (*al-qudra al-tāmma*) in comprehensive administration [of creation, abolition, command and prohibition] according to His will.¹⁰² *Mulk* shows the greatness of God’s kingdom: in this sense it is related to power, and it is said that Allah is the Most Powerful of everything.

Other verses which mention *mulk* include the following examples.

Example No. 3:

The sovereignty (*mulk*) on that day belongs [only] to Allah; He will decide (*yaḥkum*) between them, and those who believed and did the righteous deeds will be in Gardens of delight. (Q.22:56)

In this verse *mulk* is mentioned concerning the Day of Judgement and it is stated that *mulk* belongs only to God. This phrase indicates not only sovereignty but also power and dominion.¹⁰³ The verse implies that judgement by God is a part of His sovereignty. If this part of the verse is excluded, judgement by God still implies His sovereignty for there is no other judgement that can prevail in the Hereafter.

¹⁰¹ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 1/529.

¹⁰² Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 1/353. Cf. al-Shawkānī, *Fath al-qadīr*, 1/191; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 1/126. Both of them interpret *mulk* as “administration” (*taṣarruf*).

¹⁰³ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 9/181; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 9/177.

Thus judgement by God stands as the manifestation of His sovereignty, that is, His authority.

Example No. 4:

The day when they will come out, nothing of them will be hidden from Allah. “To whom belongs the kingdom (*mulk*) this day? To Allah, the One, the Irresistible”. (Q.40:16)

In this verse, besides the meaning of kingdom, *mulk* also implies dominion and power (*sulṭān*). It also indicates that God, Who is the ruler and judge on this day, is the All-Powerful.¹⁰⁴

Example No. 5:

Say: “I have no power (*la-amlik*) over benefit or hurt to myself except as Allah wills. If I had the knowledge of the unseen, I should have secured for myself an abundance of wealth, and no evil should have touched me; I am only a warner and a bringer of glad tidings to people who believe.” (Q.7:188)

In this verse the verb *amlik* gives two possible verbal nouns: *mulk* and *milik*. *Amlik* literally means “I possess”, which renders “possession (*milik*) [of something]”. However, commentators like al-Ṭabarī and Abū al-Suʿūd interpret it as power (*qudra*). They say that *milik* conveys a particular meaning that implies a sort of power or ability, leading to the association of possession (*milik*) with power or ability.¹⁰⁵ If we say that the verb *amlik* here reflects *mulk*, it leads us to its associated meaning, which is power, that is, having control.

¹⁰⁴ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 11/48; al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 13/524; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 12/310.

¹⁰⁵ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 6/140-1; Abū al-Suʿūd, *Irshād*, 2/329.

Example No. 6:

...except the saying of Ibrāhīm to his father: “Verily I will ask forgiveness for you but I have no power to do anything for you before Allah (*lā amliku la-ka mina llāhi min shay'*)...” (Q.60:4)

In this verse *amlik* indicates power and shows the authority of God over the Prophet Ibrāhīm, whose prayer is subject to judgement by Him.

Example No. 7:

Thus do We show Ibrāhīm the kingdom (*malakūt*) of the heavens and the earth that he be one of those who have faith with certainty. (Q.6:75)

Here the Qur'ān uses the word *malakūt* instead of *mulk*, both of which mean kingdom. According to some commentators, *malakūt* is an exaggeration (*mubālagha*) of *mulk*, which indicates that this kingdom has a great and powerful dominion.¹⁰⁶

Example No. 8:

Our last example is the Qur'ān's use of *malk* which occurs in Q.20:87. The verse reads:

They said: “We broke not the promise to you of our own dominion (*bi-malkinā*), but we were made to carry the weight of the ornaments of the people, then we cast them down, and that was what al-Sāmirī suggested.”

The word *malk* is also read as *mulk* and *milk*. Most commentators interpret it to mean dominion (*sulṭān*), which includes power (*qudra*) and potency (*tāqa*). Al-Rāzī and Abū Ḥayyān claim that all three readings have the same meaning, that is, *sulṭān*.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 5/243; al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 6/386; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 4/187.

¹⁰⁷ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 8/444-5; al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 11/22; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 8/555; Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 6/249.

To sum up, *mulk* basically means possession, which in Qur'ānic usage is normally associated with the idea of authority, power and kingship. Its relation to *ḥukm* consists of the element of authority in *mulk*, which associates it with *ḥukm*. Both *mulk* and *ḥukm*, meaning authority, occur in Q.22:56,¹⁰⁸ which mentions that God as the king on the Day of Judgement will decide between His servants. *Mulk* is not a direct meaning of *ḥukm*, but a relational meaning, and its association with *ḥukm* is that of authority.

6. *Taşarruf*

The word *taşarruf* comes from *şarrafa* which literally means “to turn” or “to turn away” (*radd*).¹⁰⁹ According to al-Rāghib, *şarf*, from which *taşarruf* is derived, means “turning away” [from one condition or type to another].¹¹⁰ Thus *taşarruf* indicates [the right of] turning away”. According to Wehr, it can also mean “disposal” [that is, placement or arrangement in a particular order], “administration”, “action” and “discharge”¹¹¹ implying the meaning of “control”. *Taşarruf* does not exist in the Qur'ān although we do find *şarafa*, *şarrafa* and *maşrif*. The root *ş-r-f* and its derivatives appear thirty times in the Qur'ān and all of them indicate turning away. The following examples highlight the Qur'ānic usage of the verb *şarafa*.

¹⁰⁸ The verse reads: “The Sovereignty on that Day will be that of Allah. He will judge between them...(*al-mulk yawma'idhin li-llahi yaḥkumu baynahum*). See example no. 3, p. 44 above.

¹⁰⁹ *Tahdhīb al-lisān*, 2/17.

¹¹⁰ Al-Rāghib, *al-Mufradāt*, 279; cf. al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 10/97-98; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 9/441.

¹¹¹ Hans Wehr, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, 513.

Examples Nos. 1, 2 and 3:

The first is Q.3:152, which reads:

And Allah indeed fulfilled His promise to you when you were killing them with His permission, until when you lost your courage and fell to disputing about the order, and disobeyed after He showed you what you love. Some of you wish this world and some of you wish the Hereafter. Then He turned you (*ṣarafakum*) from them that He might try you but He forgave you, and Allah is Most Gracious to the Believers.

The commentators interpret *ṣarafa* in this verse as “to turn”, that is, to turn the Muslims away from one condition to another, in which they had suffered defeat after initially vanquishing their enemies.¹¹² Similarly are:

See you not that Allah drives the clouds gently, then joins them together, then makes them into a layered heap, and you see the rain comes forth from between them; and He sends down from the sky hail [like] mountains, and strikes therewith whom He wills, and averts (*yaṣrif*) it from whom He wills. The vivid flash of its [clouds] lightning nearly blinds the sight. (Q.24:43)¹¹³

And in the alternation of night and day, and the provision [rain] that Allah has sent down from the sky, and revived therewith the earth after its death, and in the turning (*taṣrif*) about of the winds are signs for a people who understand (*yaʿqilūn*). (Q.45:5)¹¹⁴

The following verses show the other meanings of *ṣarf* which appear in the Qurʾān.

Example No. 4:

I shall turn away (*sa-asrif*) from my signs those who behave arrogantly on the earth without a right, and [even] if they see all the signs they will not believe in them. And if they see the way of righteousness they will not adopt it as a way; but if they see the way of error, they will adopt it as a way. That is because they have rejected Our signs, and were heedless of them. (Q.7:146)

¹¹² Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 3/474; al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 4/494; al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ*, 4/153; Abū al-Suʿūd, *Irshād*, 1/432; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 2/302; al-Shawkānī, *Faṭḥ al-qadīr*, 1/472.

¹¹³ See al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 11/611; Abū al-Suʿūd, *Irshād*, 4/101; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 9/441.

¹¹⁴ See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 11/253; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 13/138.

In this verse, most commentators interpret *ṣarafa* as “to prevent”.¹¹⁵ Here, prevention (*manʿ*) is not the direct meaning of *ṣarafa*, but a relational meaning as understood by the commentators.

Examples Nos. 5 and 6:

And surely We have turned (*ṣarrafnā*) things [explained] in this Qurʾān, that they may take heed, but it increases them in naught save aversion. (Q.17:41)

The verb *ṣarrafa*, according to the commentators, means “to explain”.¹¹⁶ According to al-Rāzī, this meaning is a metonymy or an indirect expression (*kināya*) of *ṣarf* on the basis that one who tries to explain something must to an extent change his words from one type to another in order to perfect his explanation.¹¹⁷ Similar to this verse is Q.6:46, which reads:

Say: “Think you, if Allah took away your hearing and your sight and sealed up your hearts, what god is there other than Allah who could restore them to you?” See how We turn [explain] (*nuṣarrif*) the signs, yet they turn aside.¹¹⁸

From this discussion we see that the basic meaning of *ṣarf* is turning. This word also carries the related meaning of “explanation”. When it is used with God as its subject, it shows God’s authority to turn away and change the condition of His creation. Thus it implies God’s authority to make any change He wishes, which suggests His authority to make decisions and to judge. This notion implies a link between *taṣarruf* and *ḥukm* owing to their both signifying “authority”. Therefore, as

¹¹⁵ Al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ*, 7/180; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 5/58; al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 9/90-91.

¹¹⁶ Al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ*, 10/172; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 8/78.

¹¹⁷ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 10/98.

¹¹⁸ See al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 7/203-4. Al-Qurṭubī elucidates this explanation; these *āyāt* contain many aspects including attraction (*targhīb*) and intimidation (*tarhīb*). See al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ*, 6/276.

we saw before, the verses in which God is the subject of the verb *ṣaraḥa* describe His control and authority over the universe.

7. *ʿAdl*

The word *ʿadl* appears twenty eight times in the Qurʾān. Its basic meaning is “equalisation” (*taswiya*).¹¹⁹ According to Ibn Manẓūr, *ʿadl* is a thing that is established in the intellect as being right (*mustaqīm*), that is, the opposite of unjust (*jawr*). *ʿAdl* also means “judgement according to the truth”.¹²⁰ This leads to the idea that a just man among the people is one whose speech and judgement are acceptable and so whose evidence is acceptable.¹²¹ In this context *ʿadl* has been developed as a legal term which designates a just and therefore acceptable witness.

In the Qurʾān, *ʿadl* normally means “equalisation”, usually understood as justice.

Example No. 1:

O you who believe, when you contract a debt one to the other for a fixed period, write it down; let a scribe write it down in justice (*bi-l-ʿadl*) between you and let not the scribe refuse to write as Allah has taught him, so let him write. Let him [the debtor] who incurs the liability dictate, and he must fear Allah, his Lord and diminish not of what he owes. (Q.2:282)

ʿAdl here means equalisation, which is normally interpreted as justice, in the sense of equalisation between two parties. According to some exegetes, *ʿadl* means truth (*al-ḥaqq*) and justice (*al-inṣāf*),¹²² both of which imply that there should be no

¹¹⁹ Al-Rāghīb, *al-Mufradāt*, 325; cf. Huart, ‘*ʿAdl*’, *E.I.*, 1/142.

¹²⁰ *Tahdhīb al-lisān*, 2/145; Lane, *Lexicon*, 2/1974.

¹²¹ *Tahdhīb al-lisān*, 2/145.

¹²² Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 3/118.

leniency towards either of the two parties, such as giving more consideration to one party or ignoring its rights.¹²³ Thus *‘adl* as “equalisation” (*taswiya*) means giving both parties the same rights.¹²⁴

Example No. 2:

And fear a Day [of Judgement] when one person shall not avail another nor will intercession be accepted from him, nor any equivalent [compensation] (*‘adl*) be taken, nor will they be helped. (Q.2:48)

The word *‘adl* here means ransom (*fidya*) or compensation (*badal*) because it is equivalent to the object of compensation. According to some scholars, this equivalence has value and is measurable, even though the replacement is not identical to the original.¹²⁵

Example No. 3:

Verily Allah enjoins justice (*‘adl*) and kindness, and giving to kindred, and He forbids abomination, disapproved conduct and wrong. He admonishes you that you may take heed. (Q.16:90)

In this verse, the word *‘adl* again means equalisation (*taswiya*). Most commentators define equalisation here as “intermediateness” (*tawassut*), meaning moderation between deficiency (*tafrīt*) and extravagance (*ifrāt*).¹²⁶

¹²³ Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 2/359; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma‘ānī*, 2/54.

¹²⁴ Cf. al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 1/144.

¹²⁵ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, 1/308; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma‘ānī*, 1/253.

¹²⁶ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 9/620; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma‘ānī*, 7/454; al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 1/554; al-Shawkānī, *Faṭḥ al-qadīr*, 3/192-2.



Example No. 4:

In Q.4:58, *ʿadl* is translated as “justice”. The verse reads:

Allah commands you to render back your trusts to those to whom they are due and when you judge (*wa idhā ḥakamtum*) between the people that you judge (*tahkum*) with justice (*ʿadl*): Verily how excellent is the teaching which Allah gives you. Truly, Allah is ever All-Hearing, All-Seeing. (Q.4:58)

Al-Khāzin says that *ʿadl* means equity in distributing something where any stipulation which is not oppressive (*ḡulm*) is considered to be just. He furthermore states that *ʿadl* here means giving someone his right.¹²⁷ He seems to relate this meaning to the obligation of holding a trust (*amṇa*). The occasion of the revelation of this verse shows that *ʿadl* here is the act of giving someone what is due to him, since the verse concerns the Prophet being ordered to return the key of the Kaʿba to its original owner.¹²⁸ The original meaning of *ʿadl*, “equalisation”, is altered to a technical meaning, that is, “to give someone what is due to him”.

Here it can be assumed that *ʿadl* in the Qurʾān has the basic meaning of “equalisation” (*taswiya*). However, in some verses it is used differently to mean “ransom” (*fidya*) and an “intermediate position” (*tawassuʿ*), for example, though these meanings are still based on the concept of equalisation. *ʿAdl* also means to give someone what is due to him. *ʿAdl* can be stated as an abstract concept because it is dealt with case by case and therefore cannot be fixed. It can also stand as the opposite of injustice (*ḡulm*), therefore implying the element of restraint and prevention from doing injustice. This idea of prevention could be related to the original meaning of *ʿukm*. Its relation with *ʿukm*, for example, is that when the decision (*ʿukm* or *qaṣṣ*) is made according to the truth [which restrains from

¹²⁷ Al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 2/99; cf. al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 3/62.

¹²⁸ For details see below, p. 86.

injustice], this decision is referred to as *ʿadl*.¹²⁹ Therefore, it can be suggested that *ʿadl* is not an actual but only a relational meaning of *ḥukm*. This is because of their shared functional meaning of “prevention”, and also their connection in fair judgement (*ḥukm ʿadl*). Judgement by God is just because He judges according to the truth and He also characterises Himself as the best judge.¹³⁰ Thus, His *ḥukm* is regarded as perfect and just, and the wisdom behind His *ḥukm* is known only to Him.

ʿAdl, as noted above, is not a meaning of *ḥukm*. It is related to *ḥukm* through the characteristic of *ḥukm* as being just. This means that if such *ḥukm* is unjust, it is not in fact related to *ʿadl*.

8. *Amr*

The word *amr* has two basic meanings: “a matter” or “a command” [that is, the opposite of interdiction].¹³¹ It appears 167 times in the Qurʾān and some examples are presented below.

Example No. 1:

The originator of the heavens and the earth. When He decrees a matter (*amran*), He only says: “Be!” and it is. (Q.2:117)

Most commentators do not give any explanation of *amr*. Here its basic meaning is “a matter” or “a thing”.¹³²

¹²⁹ *Yuqāl huwa yaqāḍi bi-l-ḥaqq wa yaʿdil*. See *Tahdhīb al-lisān*, 2/146.

¹³⁰ Q.21:112 (see below, p. 68); Q.12:80 (see below, p. 62)

¹³¹ *Tahdhīb al-lisān*, 1/43; S. Pines, ‘Amr’, *E.I.*, 1/449.

¹³² Al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 1/84; al-Shawkānī, *Fath al-qadīr*, 1/198.

Example No. 2:

Verily your Lord is Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth in six days, then He rose over the throne. He causes the night to cover the day, seeking it rapidly, and [He created] the sun and the moon and the stars subjected to His command (*bi-amrihī*). Surely, His is the Creation and Commandment (*al-amr*). Blessed is Allah, the Lord of the universe. (Q.7:54)

In this verse, *amr* appears twice: Firstly, to state that the things mentioned are according to God's *amr*, and secondly, that the right of *amr* belongs to Him only. In this context, both of them can mean "decision" (*qaḍā*), "will" (*irāda*), "administration" (*tadbīr*) and "command". Most commentators interpret the word *amr* in this verse in these senses.¹³³

Example No. 3:

Verily they have plotted sedition before, and have upset matters for you, until the truth came and the decision (*amr*) of Allah became manifest in spite of their hatred. (Q.9:48)

In this verse *amr* can be interpreted as "decision" (*qaḍā*) and "command". However, some commentators interpret it as having another meaning, namely that it refers to the religion of Islam.¹³⁴ What can be said here is that "the religion of Islam" is neither a direct nor an indirect meaning of *amr* but rather an explanation of what this word refers to. This means that the phrase "the decision of Allah" refers to the command and decision by Allah concerning the emergence and victory of Islam.

¹³³ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 4/377-8; al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 1/342; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 2/519-20; Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 4/311-12.

¹³⁴ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 5/304; al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 1/407; Ibn ʿAṭīyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 3/4; Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 5/52.

Example No. 4:

We informed him [of our decision] regarding that matter (*amr*) that the roof of those [sinners] would to be torn in the early morning. (Q.15:66)

In this verse, the word *amr* means matter, which refers to God's decision to punish the sinners among the Prophet Lūṭ's people. Therefore it can be assumed to mean a "decided matter".

Example No. 5:

The matter (*amr*) of Allah will come to pass, so seek not to hasten it; glory be to Him and exalted be He above all that they associate [as partners with Him]. (Q.16:1)

Most of the commentators give various meanings for *amr*, such as "principle obligations" (*farā'id*), "the Hereafter" and "punishment".¹³⁵ However, al-Alūsī wisely notes that *amr* here means "a matter" and therefore can refer to any of these meanings.¹³⁶

Example No. 6:

And recall when We said to the angels: "Prostrate yourselves unto Ādam," and they prostrated themselves except Iblīs; he was one of the jinn and disobeyed the command (*amr*) of his Lord. Will you then take him and his progeny as protectors apart from Me while they are enemies to you? What an evil is the exchange for the wrongdoers. (Q.18:50)

Here *amr* means "command".

To sum up, it is clear that *amr* means mainly a "matter" and "command", both meanings, when related to God, being associated with decision and judgement (*qaḍā*). According to the commentators, *amr* in the Qur'ān has several meanings

¹³⁵ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 7/556-7; Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 5/458; Ibn 'Aṭīyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 3/377.

¹³⁶ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 7/334.

because it can refer to any one of a number of particular things. This is why Muslim scholars called it one of the homonyms (*wujūh*) of the Qur'ān.¹³⁷ In its meaning as *qadā'*, which is one of the meanings of the word *ḥukm*, it can be related to *irāda*, *taṣarruf* and *tadbīr*. In some verses *amr* can also include decision and judgement, and here its translation as “matter” can indicate a decided or a decisive matter. Hence *amr* is related to *ḥukm* through the latter meaning of *qadā'*, and when God is the subject it shows His authority. Thus it implies that the command of God is something which must be executed, and this idea is supported in Q.4:47, which reads:

O you who have been given the Scripture! Believe in what We have revealed confirming what is with you before We obliterate faces and turn them inwards or curse them as We cursed the Sabbath-breakers. And the commandment of Allah is surely executed (*wa kāna amru llāhi maf'ūlan*).

9. *Sharī'a*

The word *sharī'a* is derived from the root *sh-r-c*, and in the Qur'ān it appears five times in different forms: *shara'a*, *shara'ū*, *shurra'*, *shir'a* and *sharī'a*. The verb *shara'a* literally means “to make a clear path”.¹³⁸ According to the Arabs' use of *sharī'a*, it means a place where people go to drink and to draw water¹³⁹ or a path leading to such water.¹⁴⁰ This place is called *mashra'at al-mā'*. According to Lane, such a source of water is “permanent and apparent to the eye like the water of rivers,

¹³⁷ For the introduction to this aspect of homonyms, see A.J. Arberry, ‘Synonyms and Homonyms in the Qur'ān’, *Islamic Quarterly*, 13, 1969, pp.135-9.

¹³⁸ *Tahdhīb al-lisān*, 1/665; al-Rāghib, *al-Mufradāt*, 258; Lane, *Lexicon*, 2/1535.

¹³⁹ *Tahdhīb al-lisān*, 1/665; Lane, *Lexicon*, 2/1535.

¹⁴⁰ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 3/321; al-Shawkānī, *Fath al-qadīr*, 2/51.

not water from which one draws with the well-rope.”¹⁴¹ This means that the place is obvious and known to everyone,¹⁴² which suggests that the verb *shara^ca* means “to set a clear trail that someone can follow.”

The root *sh-r-c* occurs five times in the Qurʾān all of which are presented below.

Example No. 1:

And ask them about the town that was by the sea when they transgressed in the matter of the Sabbath (*sabt*) when fish came openly (*shurra^can*) to them on the Sabbath day, but on the day when they had no Sabbath, they did not come to them. Thus, do We made a trial of them for they used to rebel [against Allah’s Command]. (Q.7:163)

The verse uses *shurra^c* according to its basic meaning, “a clear path”. Its use indicates that the fish came too close to the people on the Sabbath, so that they could easily catch them.

Example No. 2:

Or have they partners [with God] who have instituted (*shara^cū*) for them a religion which Allah has not ordained? And had it not been for a decisive word the matter would have been judged between them. And verily for the wrong-doers is a painful torment. (Q.42:21)

The verb *shara^cū* here can mean “they made a clear path”¹⁴³ for these people to follow which is rejected by God.

¹⁴¹ Lane, *Lexicon*, 2/1535.

¹⁴² Lane, *Lexicon*, 2/1535.

¹⁴³ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi^c al-bayān*, 11/141; Ibn ʿAṭiyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 5/33; al-Biqāʿī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 6/21.

Example No. 3:

He has [set] a clear path (*shara^ca*) to you in religion which He ordained for Nūḥ and that which We have revealed to you, and which We ordained for Ibrāhīm, Mūsā and ʿĪsā saying you should establish the religion and do not make division in it... (Q.42:13)

The use of the verb *shara^ca* in this verse, referring to religious obligations, suggests the meaning “to set a clear path”.

Example No. 4:

Then We have put you on a clear path (*sharī^ca*) of [Our] commandment; follow you that, and follow not the desires of those who do not know. (Q.45:18)

Though *sharī^ca* basically means a clear path, its use here to mean the way that the Prophet should follow suggests that it refers to religion. *Sharī^ca* is used in this way because it is a place where people can take in the command of God.¹⁴⁴

Example No. 5:

And We have sent down to you the Book [the Qurʾān] in truth confirming the Book which was before it and as protector over it. So judge between them by what Allah has sent down and follow not their vain desires diverging from the truth that has come to you. To each among you We have prescribed a law (*shir^ca*) and a clear way (*minhāj*). Had Allah so willed He would have made you one nation, but [He has not done so] in order that He may test you in what He has given you; so compete in good deeds. The return of you all is to Allah, then He will inform you of that in which you used to differ. (Q.5:48)

Al-Ṭabarī says that *shir^ca* in this verse is identical to *sharī^ca*.¹⁴⁵ The exegetes says that the *shir^ca* here is used metaphorically in two ways: the first is a way that leads to religion;¹⁴⁶ the second is the religion because the latter is the way that leads to

¹⁴⁴ Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 8/47.

¹⁴⁵ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi^c al-bayān*, 4/609.

¹⁴⁶ Al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-taʾwīl*, 2/280.

eternal life [happiness in the Hereafter].¹⁴⁷ The beginning of this verse is concerned with three important elements: the sending down of the Book; the judgement by what God has sent down; and the introduction of the *shirʿa*, each of which leads to the other. These three elements comprise one idea; the revelation from God by which men must judge. This means that *shirʿa* refers to what God has sent down, that is, the Book. The original meaning of *shirʿa*, a clear path, suggests that what God has sent down - the Book - is a clear path that men must follow. This means that *shirʿa* can refer to the religion itself as something that men must follow, or to the laws of the religion, which men must also follow. This is supported by the context of the verse, which is related to legal judgement [judgement by what God has sent down]. This implies that *shirʿa* is referred to, in this verse, as what God has commanded that judgement should be made according to what He has sent down: thus, *shirʿa* manifests this judgement.

In conclusion, we find that the verb *sharaʿa* and its derivatives mean “a clear path”. Its usage in the Qurʾān shows that *sharīʿa* means a path which has been decreed and formed by God.¹⁴⁸ This implies that what God judges for men concerning His laws can be termed *sharīʿa*. Thus it can be assumed that *sharīʿa* and *ḥukm* are interrelated on the basis that both are related to judgement.

¹⁴⁷ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 3/321; al-Shawkānī, *Fath al-qadīr*, 2/51.

¹⁴⁸ Q.5:48 and Q.45:18.

10. *Minhāj*

The word *minhāj* is derived from the root *n-h-j*, which means “a clear or straight path”.¹⁴⁹ It appears only once in the Qur’ān, in Q.5:48,¹⁵⁰ next to the word *shirʿa*. *Shirʿa*, which also means “a clear path”, has been discussed above. Thus it seems that *shirʿa* and *minhāj* have very similar meanings. Some commentators consider them to be identical in meaning, but others say that there is a difference between them. *Shirʿa* is “a clear path” and *minhāj* is “a path that leads to the *sharīʿa* or *shirʿa*”.¹⁵¹ It can certainly be concluded that these two words are closely related. Therefore, if *shirʿa* or *sharīʿa* is related to *ḥukm*, then *minhāj* is also related to *ḥukm*.

The above discussion shows that the terms examined can be related to the word *ḥukm* through two meanings: judgement and authority. It elucidates the integrity of the relevant Qur’ānic verses in demonstrating this idea.

E. Further considerations

In the foregoing discussion some Qur’ānic verses have been explored in which the root *ḥ-k-m* occurs. Two important meanings of judgement by God have been identified: the general and the legal. However, the contextual verses suggest that these two meanings allude to another meaning, namely “authority”. It can be assumed from the presentation in these verses that authority is the hidden meaning of judgement by God. Therefore, it can be said that the authority of God underpins His

¹⁴⁹ *Tahdhīb al-lisān*, 2/652; al-Rāghib, *al-Mufradāt*, 506.

¹⁵⁰ See above, p. 58.

¹⁵¹ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 3/321; cf. al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 2/280.

decision and judgement. We also discussed some terms related to the root *h-k-m* showing its connotations of “authority” and “judgement”.

This section is an examination of the ideas that the Qur’ān tries to establish: ideas derived from the verses in which the root *h-k-m* occurs. This can be achieved partly through analysing the contextual meaning comprehended by the verses. Reference will be made to previous verses as well as other verses that have not yet been mentioned.

Analysis has shown that discussion on judgement by God highlights His authority which itself becomes an important element of belief in God, indeed it is a requirement of a believer. The verses in which the root *h-k-m* occurs are divided into two phases of revelation, that is Meccan and Medinan. Most of the ideas of judgement by God are presented in the Meccan verses.

1. Judgement as God’s prerogative

The central idea of the verses is that judgement is God’s prerogative without any interference from others. Meccan verses underline this idea in several ways. The first is by using the phrase *ini-l-ḥukmu illā li-llāh* (The judgement belongs only to Allah), which occurs in four Meccan verses: Q.6:57, Q.12:40, Q.12:67 and Q.18:26. The first two have been previously quoted.¹⁵² Q.6:57 refers to God’s decision to send down punishment on the Prophet’s enemies. Q.12:40 is concerned with obedience, which is due only to God. In these two verses the phrase above is used to emphasise God’s authority to judge, and show that judgement is His prerogative.

¹⁵² See above, pp. 8-9.

Q.12:67 refers to Ya^cqūb's plan for his children to enter Egypt. Even though he devised the plan, he realised that God's decision was above everything. The verse reads:

And he said: "O my son! Do not enter by one gate, but enter by different gates, and I cannot avail you against Allah at all. Verily the judgement belongs only to Allah (*ini-l-ḥukmu illā li-llāh*). In him I put my trust and let all those that trust put their trust in Him."

The phrase "I cannot avail you against Allah at all" implies that Ya^cqūb's plan was subject to God's decision. He stated that judgement belonged only to God, and that the final decision and plan were His alone. Al-Rāzī relates the word *ḥukm* to its primary meaning, "prevention", which he describes as meaning to "maintain a single decision preventing the other possible decisions", and when it is used in connection with God, it shows that all possible things depend on God's will.¹⁵³ Therefore, Ya^cqūb reminds his children that they should be mentally prepared when they are about to enter Egypt, though the plan would be worked out carefully in advance. This implies that man's plan is in competition with God's plan, and the latter overwhelms the former.

Q.12:80 refers to the judgement by God as an authoritative judgement. The verse reads:

When they despaired of him, they held a conference in private. The eldest among them said: "Know you not that your father did take an oath from you in Allah's Name, and before this you did fail in your duty with Yūsuf? Therefore I will not leave this land until my father permits me, or Allah decides my case (*yahkuma llāhu lī*) and He is the Best of the judges (*wa huwa khayru l-ḥākimīn*).

The verse concerns Yūsuf's brother after the "stolen bowl" was found in Binyāmīn's [= Benjamin] bag, which caused his detention, as a result of which the eldest among them refused to go back. He saw himself as having two options: obtaining his

¹⁵³ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 9/105.

father's permission to leave Egypt; or God deciding another course which would bring about his brother's release.¹⁵⁴ The first option seemed to be the more preferable to him. Though his referral to God's decision suggests an excuse for his failure in protecting his brother, in effect it means that he refers to the One Who originally possessed the right of judgement, while at the same time implying that his father's permission was itself one of the judgements by God.¹⁵⁵

In Q.18:26, the phrase above does not occur, instead the expression "He makes none to share in His Judgement" is used to maintain God's prerogative of judgement. The verse reads:

Say: "Allah knows best how long they stayed. With Him is [the knowledge of] the unseen of the heavens and the earth. How clearly He sees, and hears (everything). They have no helpers (*walī*) other than Him, and He makes none to share in His Judgement (*wa lā yushriku fī ḥukmihī aḥadan*)."

The verse concerns the length of time spent by the companions of the cave (*aṣḥāb al-kaḥf*) in sleep. God gives a clear answer that the exact time is known only by Him. The reasons given here are His knowledge of the unseen; His being the only helper of the people; and the fact that none can share in His decision. Hence, the verse consists of two parts: the settlement of the dispute and an assertion of God's greatness.

The use of *ḥakam* and the phrase *khayru l-ḥākimīn* conform to the idea of God's prerogative of judgement. *Ḥakam*, as seen before, occurs in Q.6:114 (see Example No. 10, p. 17) and refers to God as the only judge while showing the supremacy of God as a decision-maker. The verse reminds mankind that belief in

¹⁵⁴ God's decision here is referred to as either leaving the land; releasing his brother from detainment or fighting those who would come between him and his brother. See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 7/81.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 5/322; Ibn 'Aṭīyya refers to it as general judgement. See Ibn 'Aṭīyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 3/270.

God includes belief in His perfect ability to pass judgement and establish the rules. It implies that one cannot disobey God's judgement and validly search for someone other than God as an arbiter.¹⁵⁶ The use of *ḥakam* instead of *ḥākim* in this verse is significant because *ḥakam* denotes someone who is fully qualified to be a judge and who is certainly fair in his judgement, whereas *ḥākim* is applicable to someone who passes judgement whether or not he is qualified.¹⁵⁷

In Q.6:114 it is stated that the Book stands together with the statement of God in being a *ḥakam*. It can be rendered as "God has sent down the Book and He is the only *ḥakam*", which implies submission to God's decision. This shows that submission to God's judgement is an important element of revelation. The verse also implies that following God's judgement stems from following the revelation.

The assertion that God is the best judge occurs in another Meccan verse, Q.10:109, which ends with the phrase, "He is the Best of those who judge" (*wa huwa khayru l-ḥākimīn*). The phrase should be read with the other phrases, *wa man aḥsanu mina llāhi ḥukman* and *aḥkamu l-ḥākimīn*. These phrases function to emphasise the supremacy of God as a judge. All of them occur in Meccan verses except the phrase *wa man aḥsanu mina llāhi ḥukman* which occurs in the Medinan verse, Q.5:50. This shows that the concept of belief in God's judgement and authority was foundational to the early revelation. The phrases *khayru l-ḥākimīn* and *wa man aḥsanu mina llāhi ḥukman* give an understanding of the phrase *aḥkamu l-ḥākimīn*.¹⁵⁸ The latter phrase occurs in Q.11:45 and Q.95:8. These verses read:

¹⁵⁶ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 5/318; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 2/432; Ibn 'Aṭiyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 2/337.

¹⁵⁷ See, for example al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 6/534; Ibn 'Aṭiyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 2/337; Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 4/211; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 2/432, and above, p. 17.

¹⁵⁸ Riḍā, *al-Manār*, 12/83-4.

Nūḥ called to his Lord and said: "O my Lord, my son is one of my household, and verily your promise is the truth, You are the Wisest [to judge] of those who judge (*aḥkamu l-ḥākimīn*). (Q.11:45)

Is not Allah the Wisest of those who judge (*bi-aḥkami l-ḥākimīn*). (Q.95:8)

Q.11:45 which is the Meccan verse is preceded by verses concerning the Prophet Nūḥ and his son, the latter having refused to follow the former. Instead, the son decided to choose his own way by fleeing to the hill which, he learnt, could deliver him from the flood, though Nūḥ told him that nobody could escape from God's command except those on whom God had mercy. Following his son's refusal, Nūḥ appealed to God to have mercy on his son. However, he acknowledged that whatever God's judgement might be, he would accept it, since God was the Best Judge and nobody was capable of saving his son other than Him.

Q.95:8 which is also the Meccan verse is preceded by the verses about the creation of man at his best, physically and mentally followed by his demotion to the lowest of the low. Judgement by God, therefore, not only refers to His decision in creating man here, but also to His control and action. The exegetes interpret *aḥkam* as the Most Knowledgeable (*a^clam*) and the Most Just (*a^cdal*), based on the fact that the Best Judgement comes from the best knowledge and justice.¹⁵⁹ Another interpretation, "is the Wisest", is derived from wisdom (*ḥikma*).¹⁶⁰ *Aḥkam* is a superlative of the verb *ḥakama* or *ḥakuma*.¹⁶¹ The first refers to judgement and the second to judgement and wisdom. The meaning of "wisdom" is more sensible because it acts as a basis for judgement. The phrase *aḥkamu l-ḥākimīn* can be

¹⁵⁹ See al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3/383-4; Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 5/229; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma^cānī*, 6/265; al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 1/458.

¹⁶⁰ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3/383-4; al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 1/458.

¹⁶¹ See also al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma^cānī*, 6/266.

translated as “the wisest of those who judge”, and so justice and the best judgement are expected. God’s judgement can be said to be based on the perfection of knowledge and wisdom and therefore no error or injustice can occur.¹⁶² On the other hand, the verses imply the integration of the main meanings of the root *h-k-m*, that is wisdom and judgement. It would be mere inference to suggest that these qualities of knowledge and justice are important to qualify someone to be the best judge. So where the word *khayr* is used to say that God is the best judge, it refers to His wisdom and knowledge of what is the best judgement. Hence, the verses imply that God’s judgement is absolutely true, whereas that of others is not necessarily true.¹⁶³

Judgement as God’s prerogative is also emphasised in the verses referring to His judgement in the Hereafter, the aim of which is to stress that God is a true Lord of men. Q.6:62 which is the Meccan verse (see example No. 2, p. 19) for example states that *ḥukm* is the prerogative of God, the reason being His swiftness in taking account, which implies greatness and power.

The position of God as the true and supreme judge, by whose decision others must therefore abide, is emphasised too by another Meccan verse, Q.40:48, which reads:

But those who assumed greatness say: “Lo, we are all in it; Allah has given judgement (*qad ḥakama*) amongst [His] servants.”

Here, the Qur’ān shows that God has absolute authority in judgement and His servants have no power to argue or alter His decision. This verse is a statement by

¹⁶² Riḍā, *al-Manār*, 12/84; cf. al-Shawkānī, *Fath al-qadīr*, 2/515; Abū al-Su‘ūd, *Irshād*, 3/36.

¹⁶³ Cf. Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma‘ānī*, 6/188; Riḍā, *al-Manār*, 11/493.

the Qur'ān about the great people of this world who were followed by others during their lifetimes and will be gathered with them on the Day of Judgement.¹⁶⁴

2. Underlying reasons for God's prerogative of judgement

Besides stating that judgement is God's prerogative, the Qur'ān supports this statement with justification. The fact that God is the Creator and Lord of the universe does not need to be justified, although the justification is important to man to strengthen his belief in God as the True Judge. Eliminating doubt leaves man with no choice but to accept judgement by God. On the other hand, justification can highlight the requirements that someone needs to qualify as an authoritative judge.

The first verse to be considered is Q.6:57.¹⁶⁵ It includes three phrases that refer to judgement by God in this world: *ini l-ḥukmu illā li-llāh* (the judgement belongs only to Allah); *yaquṣṣ al-ḥaqq* (He declares the truth); and *wa huwa khayru l-fāṣilīn* (and He is the Best of those who judge). The first phrase denotes the right of God to judge whereas the second functions as a justification for His Judgement. The last phrase attributes God as the best judge. Thus, the verse can be translated as "the judgement belongs only to God; He is the best of those who judge for He declares the truth." The declaration of the truth is an important element of judgement by God and it justifies judgement being His prerogative. This is supported by reading *yaqḍī al-ḥaqq* in place of *yaquṣṣ al-ḥaqq*,¹⁶⁶ which describes God as judging according to the truth.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. Q.39:46.

¹⁶⁵ For the quotation of the verse, see above, p. 8.

¹⁶⁶ See, for example, al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 5/209.

Q.21:112 shows that judgement by God is based on truth and at the same time it implies God's control over His creation. This Meccan verse reads:

Say: "O my Lord! Judge with the truth (*wa qul rabbi ḥkum bi-l-ḥaqq*); and our Lord is the Merciful, whose help is to be sought against that which you attribute."

The verse concerns the Prophet's *duʿāʾ*. There are two different readings: *qāla* and *qul*. The first narrates the *duʿāʾ* from the Prophet, whereas the second shows that God ordered the Prophet to recite the *duʿāʾ*. The truth is the basis of judgement by God. Al-Alūsī interprets *al-ḥaqq* here as justice (*ʿadl*).¹⁶⁷ This interpretation is probably based on the fact that judgement by God is fair. The use of *al-ḥaqq* implies that it is a basis of judgement by God, and justice is its outcome. The truth naturally should be in favour of right and against wrong, as represented by the believers and the unbelievers respectively. If God's word and promise are to help the believers and humiliate the unbelievers, the word "truth" can be referred to as helping the former against the latter. This suggestion is akin to the views of the exegetes who refer *al-ḥaqq* to God's punishment of the unbelievers. There are two reasons for this interpretation. The first is the preceding verse which refers to the deferring of the punishment: "I know not whether that which you are promised is near or far" (Q.21:109). The second reason is Q.21:112 can be compared to Q.7:89 which reads:

Our Lord! Judge between us and our people in truth (*iftaḥ baynanā bi-l-ḥaqq*), you are the Best of those who give judgement.

The verb *iftaḥ* is translated as "judge", which seems to be based on the contextual verse concerning the debate between unbelievers and the Prophet Shuʿayb and his followers. The truth refers to punishment, based on the following verse, Q.7:91, which reads: "So the earthquake seized them and they lay prostrate in their homes."

¹⁶⁷ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 9/102.

The exegetes quote what the Prophet Muḥammad used to say when he was launching a raid: “O my Lord! Judge with truth” (*rabbi ḥkum bi-l-ḥaqq*).¹⁶⁸

Nonetheless, the verse implies that the idea behind this *duʿāʾ* is a relationship between man and God, which in fact shows that God has control over His creatures. The use of the word *rabb* (Lord) shows the power and authority possessed by God. Thus the verse ends with the phrase “whose help is to be sought against that which you attribute.”

Q.60:10¹⁶⁹ which is the Medinan shows that knowledge and wisdom are important for passing judgement. After mentioning God’s rule the verse ends with the phrase *dhālikum ḥukmu llāhi yaḥkumu baynakum wa llāhu ʿalīm ḥakīm*. *ʿAlīm ḥakīm* which is translated as “All-Knowing, All-Wise” proves this point. This verse also implies the integration of the two meanings of the word *ḥukm*, that is wisdom and judgement. The former shown by the phrase All-Wise, the latter by the context of the verse. The importance of wisdom in this verse as a requirement of judgement can be compared to Q.27:78,¹⁷⁰ which uses the verb *yaqḍī* instead of *yaḥkum*. The final phrase of Q.27:78, *wa llāhu ʿazīz ʿalīm* (He is the Sublime, the Knowing), conveys the idea that God has freedom in passing judgement because He possesses power and knowledge. Having power means that His judgement cannot be repudiated, and having knowledge means the capability to make the right decision

¹⁶⁸ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 9/102; al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 11/223-4; cf. al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 4/331; Ibn ʿAṭīyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 4/104.

¹⁶⁹ See example no. 6, pp. 11-2 above.

¹⁷⁰ See above, p. 28.

about His servant.¹⁷¹ This implies that an effective judgement requires the capacity to implement a decision and the knowledge of how to judge in a specific case.¹⁷²

Q.13:41, also the Medinan, refers to judgement by God as a decision which nobody can revise. This implies the authority of God in making judgement, which shows that authority is essential to make judgement effective. Otherwise, it will not be respected and cannot be enforced. The verse reads:

See they not that We gradually reduce the land from its outlying borders.
And Allah judges (*yaḥkum*), there is none to put back His Judgement (*lā mu^caqqiba li-ḥukmih*) and He is Swift at reckoning. (Q.13:41)

The verse consists of three parts: God's power, no reviser of His judgement, and His swiftness in reckoning. It is preceded by verses which mention His power to send messengers; to destroy and to create anything He wishes; to show the punishment to the unbelievers; or to cause the Prophet to die. This verse continues to speak of God's power in reducing the outlying borders by giving victory to the Muslims over the unbelievers. Following this, the phrase *lā mu^caqqiba li-ḥukmih* shows that what He has judged cannot be revised by anyone, and so proves His power and authority. The phrase implies, therefore, that an authoritative judge is someone whose judgement cannot be revised.¹⁷³

The following verses refer to judgement by God in the Hereafter, and underline some reasons for His being an authoritative judge. An example is the Meccan verse, Q.40:12, which reads:

[It will be said]: "This is because when Allah Alone was invoked [in worship] you disbelieved, but when partners were joined to Him you

¹⁷¹ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma^cānī*, 10/230; Al-Shawkānī, *Fath al-qadīr*, 4/146.

¹⁷² Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 7/91.

¹⁷³ Al-Biqā^cī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 4/162-3.

believed! So the judgement is only with Allah, the Most High, the Most Great (*fa-l-ḥukmu li-llāhi l-ʿaliyyi l-kabīr*)."

The judgement refers to God's decision to put the unbelievers in Hell.¹⁷⁴ They deserve this because they have failed to follow God's rule in this world, in which He has commanded that He alone should be worshipped. The two attributes of God, Eminence and Greatness serve to show the Greatness of God. This satisfies the soul so it can submit to the judgement by God in the Hereafter.

Q.22:56, which is the Medinan, gives the reason as being that God possesses an authority which nobody can dispute: The verse reads:

The sovereignty on that Day will be that of Allah. He will judge between them (*al-mulk yawma'idhin li-llāhi yaḥkumu baynahum*)..."¹⁷⁵

The authority gives God an absolute control implied by the word *mulk* in the Hereafter.¹⁷⁶ Some exegetes say that the situation in the Hereafter is different since nobody other than God can claim to be a judge, whereas in this world there are also human judges who exercise their judgement for the people.¹⁷⁷

The Meccan verse, Q.39:46 (see example No. 3, p. 20), which we categorised as referring to the judgement by God in both this world and the Hereafter, describes God as the Creator of the heavens and the earth. This not only implies His dominance but His power and might. The verse also refers to His right to judge, which is due to His absolute knowledge [Knower of the hidden and the revealed].

¹⁷⁴ Al-Shawkānī, *Fath al-qadīr*, 4/466.

¹⁷⁵ For full quotation, see above, p. 44.

¹⁷⁶ Cf. al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 9/177.

¹⁷⁷ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 9/177; Abū al-Suʿūd, *Irshād*, 4/28; al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 11/309.

3. Types of judgement by God

In our analysis, the main idea of the judgement by God is His authority and His will, which govern man's activity. This does not mean that this section will discuss whether God's judgement predetermines man's actions. Rather, God's judgement implies that God has underlined certain rules that man must follow as his way of life. This understanding can be derived from the verses discussed above, in which one of the important rules that God has commanded man to follow is to worship only Him [Q.12:40]. Worshipping God means that man must follow God's judgement, which comprises requital and laws.

God's requital is divided into two categories, bounty and punishment, the dispensing of which depends on man's acceptance to follow God's judgement or his failure to comply with it. God's judgement may be executed in this world and the Hereafter, and also refers to worldly disputes. Verses concerning God's judgement in the Hereafter contain more references to the worldly disputes. Here some of the verses which relate to the above ideas will be explored.

Some of the verses already discussed show that God's judgement favouring or punishing His servants is executed in this world. Q.7:87 refers to God's punishment of the unbelievers, which can be interpreted as a victory for the believers over the unbelievers.¹⁷⁸ This can be compared with Q.21:112, which also refers to God's punishment of the unbelievers.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁸ For a quotation, see above, p. 10.

¹⁷⁹ For a quotation, see above, p. 68.

The following Meccan verses refer to God's judgement in the Hereafter regarding disputes between men which took place during their lives on earth. This is shown in Q.16:124 and Q.39:3 which read:

The Sabbath (*Sabt*) was only prescribed for those who differed concerning it, and verily, your Lord will judge between them (*inna rabbaka yahkum*) on the Day of Resurrection about that wherein they used to differ. (Q.16:124)

Surely the religion is for Allah only. And those who took protectors besides Him [say]: "We worship them only that they may bring us near to Allah." Verily Allah will judge between them (*inna llāha yahkumu baynahum*) concerning that wherein they differ. Truly Allah guides not him who is a liar and an unbeliever. (Q.39:3)

Q.16:124 consists of two parts: the legislation of the Sabbath for the Jews after they disputed over whether fishing was permitted on that day; and God's judgement, namely His Bounty for those who obeyed Him and His punishment for those who disobeyed Him.¹⁸⁰ Q.39:3 refers to those who worshipped idols as a means to bring them close to God, and so the disagreement is about the different approaches taken by these people and by those who worship only God. In this verse there is no statement of when the judgement will be executed. Al-Ṭabarī suggests that it is executed in the Hereafter,¹⁸¹ which seems plausible since there is no mention of the consequences of this disagreement. The people are left in their belief and the truth will be demonstrated to them in the Hereafter.

God's judgement in the Hereafter concerning worldly disputes is also stressed in Medinan verses, for example, Q.2:113 which reads:

...Allah will judge between them (*fa-llāhu yahkumu baynahum*) on the Day of Resurrection about that wherein they have been differing."¹⁸²

¹⁸⁰ See al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2/618.

¹⁸¹ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 10/612.

¹⁸² For full quotation, see above p. 19.

The verse refers to the dispute between the Jews and the Christians, who each claimed that they were the right group.

Q.3:55-57 give a clearer picture of God's judgement in the Hereafter. These verses reads:

...Then you will return to Me and I will judge between you (*fa-aḥkumu baynakum*) in the matters in which you used to dispute. As those who disbelieve, I will punish them with a severe torment in this world and in the Hereafter, and they will have no helpers. And as for those who believe and do righteous deeds, Allah will pay them their reward in full. And Allah does not like the wrong-doers.

The verses concern the return to the Hereafter of the Prophet ʿĪsā, his followers and his rejectors. The dispute, as al-Bayḍāwī suggests, is about religion,¹⁸³ including the Prophet ʿĪsā.¹⁸⁴ This is followed by the above verses which give the result of God's judgement, which is that God will punish those who disbelieve and reward those "who believe and do righteous deeds." Q.3:56 states that punishment will be imposed in this world and the Hereafter, whereas Q.3:55 refers to God's judgement being executed in the Hereafter. There should be no conflict between them because the judgement here refers to the final judgement that differentiates between believers and unbelievers and determines their fate. This means that the punishment that they deserve in this world is not the final one and it does not differentiate exactly between the believers and unbelievers. Thus, it can be assumed that one reason for mentioning the worldly punishment together with the punishment in the Hereafter is to emphasise the double punishment suffered by the unbelievers. However, the final judgement and punishment are definitely carried out in the Hereafter. It also can be

¹⁸³ Al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 1/162.

¹⁸⁴ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 3/291.

assumed that the other reason is to show that the punishment in the Hereafter is more severe than that in this world.¹⁸⁵

The second category of God's judgement is His laws which govern human conduct. This also includes rituals, which are regarded as God's judgement since they come from Him. This is covered by Medinan verses. Q.5:1 (see example no. 5, p. 11) deals with the food that is either permissible or prohibited depending on the judgement of God as expressed in the Qur'ān. It is a ruling which differs from the practice of the Arabs before the emergence of Islam.¹⁸⁶ The phrase "Allah decides (*yaḥkum*) what He wills" implies three important points:

1. God has the authority to permit or prohibit anything. This principle underpins the lifestyle and legal system from which a complete set of rules is extrapolated.
2. Even though God's judgement pertains to establishing laws about what food is allowable, the phrase may imply His wider activity, including making decrees, for example, about the physical ordering of the universe.
3. Judgement comes from God alone, implying that there is no intervention in His work and therefore that He has absolute freedom when making a decision.¹⁸⁷

God's judgement concerning His laws is widely explained to men through the revelation. This means that the laws that men take from the revelation are the divine laws. In other words it means that judgement by the divine Book is judgement by God. Thus there is a need for man to follow and accept God's ruling. The example is Q.5:43: "But why do they come to you for decision (*yuḥakkimūnak*) when they

¹⁸⁵ Cf. Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 1/76-7.

¹⁸⁶ Cf. Al-Shawkānī, *Fath al-qadīr*, 2/7; Ibn 'Aṭīyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 2/145.

¹⁸⁷ Cf. Ibn 'Aṭīyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 2/145; Quṭb, *Ẓilāl*, 2/644.

have the Torah, wherein is the *ḥukm* of Allah”, whereas in Q.5:50 *ḥukmu llāh* is implied as the best and perfect: “But who is better in judgement (*ḥukman*) than Allah for a people who certainly believe?” However, these verses refer not only to the perfection of God’s judgement but also to His authority to do what He wants.

Another verse which refers to judgement by the Book is Q.13:37, which reads:

And thus have We sent it [the Qur’ān] down to be a judgement in Arabic (*ḥukman ‘arabiyyan*). Were you [O Muḥammad] to follow their [vain] desires after the knowledge that has come to you, then you will not have any protector or defender against Allah.

The revelation refers to the Qur’ān because the revelation is mentioned as having been given to the Prophet Muḥammad. All these verses [Q.5:1, 43, 50; Q.13:37] are Medinan, and since the Prophet exercised adjudication in Medina, these verses state that the divine Book, in particular the Qur’ān, should be a basis of judgement by the Prophet.

From this discussion on God’s judgement, we can see that it constitutes His authority over the universe including its human population. This in turn requires His creation to follow and obey the laws that He has laid down for it. This authority of God as manifested by His judgement is further illustrated by Qur’ānic verses which discuss judgement by others, the subject of study in the next chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

JUDGEMENT BY OTHERS

This chapter will study judgement by those other than God, which, in the Qur'ānic view, occurs only in this world. The Qur'ān mentions this kind of judgement thirty-nine times in thirty-two verses, of which twenty-one are Medinan. This type of judgement can be divided into two categories: judgement in accordance with the Qur'ān and judgement not in accordance with the Qur'ān.

A. Judgement in accordance with the Qur'ān

If the Qur'ānic verses containing the root *ḥ-k-m* are examined, it is clear that many of them refer to judgement by those other than God. What is meant by judgement in accordance with the Qur'ān is that the Qur'ān commands them to judge in a certain way or that such judgement by them does not receive any negative remark from the Qur'ān. In relation to this, the Qur'ān refers to the judgement of prophets and of men in general. "Prophets" includes Dāwūd, Sulaymān and Muḥammad; "men" includes the people of the Injil and just men. Each will be studied to understand the meanings of the root *ḥ-k-m* in this context.

1. Judgement by prophets

The judgement by the prophets can be traced in Q.5:44. The verse reads:

Verily We did send down the Torah, therein was guidance and light, by which the prophets, who submitted themselves [to Allah's Will], judge (*yaḥkum*) for the Jews. And the rabbis and the priests [too judged for the Jews], for to them was entrusted the protection of Allah's Book, and there were witnesses thereto. Therefore fear not men but fear Me and sell not My verses for a miserable price. And whoever does not judge (*yaḥkum*) by what Allah has sent down such are the *kāfirūn*.

The verse occurs in the middle of the verses in *Sūrat al-Mā'ida* which refer to judgement by the Prophet Muḥammad. The preceding verse, Q.5:43,¹ reproaches the Jews who were pretending to seek judgement from the Prophet, when in fact they did not want to do so. Since they possessed the Torah containing the *ḥukm* of God and they did not want to submit to it, the verse questions their sincerity in seeking the Prophet's judgement.² Q.5:44 begins with an acknowledgement of the Torah, which is described as having guidance and light.³ According to al-Rāzī, the verse is a reminder from God to the Jews, who had refused the penalty of stoning, to encourage them to follow their predecessors, the priests and the prophets.⁴ The prophets referred to here are those who came after Mūsā.⁵ This verse means that the Jews were given the Torah by which the prophets of the children of Israel, the rabbis and the priests judged for them. Thus the verb *yaḥkum* means "to judge." The rabbis and the priests⁶ can be said to refer to the scholars and those among the Jews who practised the law of the Torah. This means that the prophets were the leading examples to those who followed the revelation and who were knowledgeable men. Therefore, the ordinary people who claim that they are the followers of such revelation should adhere to it. The phrase "who submitted themselves to [Allah's Will] (*alladhīna aslamū*)" implies submission to and belief in the Torah as a

¹ This verse has been quoted above, p. 12.

² Cf. al-Biqā'ī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 2/458.

³ Al-Biqā'ī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 2/459.

⁴ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 6/29.

⁵ Some exegetes refer it to the Prophet Muḥammad where the plural form (*al-nabiyyūn*) is a sound of greatness (*li-l-ta'ẓīm*). For example see al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-ta'wīl*, 2/275.

⁶ The exegetes have different opinions of what is meant by the rabbis and the priests. See, for example, al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 6/31; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-ta'wīl*, 2/275.

revelation from God, and so the followers of the Torah should submit themselves to it as a manifestation of their belief in it.⁷

2. Judgement by the Prophets Dāwūd and Sulaymān

There are three Qur'ānic verses that refer to judgement by the Prophet Dāwūd, one of which includes a reference to judgement by the Prophet Sulaymān. These Meccan verses are Q.21:78, Q.38:21-22 and Q.38:26.

Verse No. 1:

And Dāwūd and Sulaymān, when they give judgement (*yaḥkumāni*) in the case of the field where the sheep of certain people had pastured at night; and We were witness to their judgement (*li-ḥukmihim shāhidīn*). (Q.21:78)

The verse is about a dispute between the owner of a field and the owners of sheep over the fact that the sheep had pastured in the field at night. The Prophets Dāwūd and Sulaymān each gave a different judgement.⁸ The Prophet Dāwūd judged that the sheep should be handed over to the owner of the field. However, the Prophet Sulaymān had a different opinion and suggested that the sheep should be lent to the owner of the field until he recovered the loss from the damage that the sheep had caused.⁹ The judgement refers to legal judgement which produces case law. Thus, the verb *yaḥkumāni* means “they give judgement”, that is, a legal judgement.

This verse is important in Islamic law for jurists have drawn from it at least three significant points. The first is compensation allowed in law for damage to the

⁷ Cf. al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 6/30-31.

⁸ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 9/51; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 4/303.

⁹ Al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 17/98-9.

field done by another person. The second is possibility of *ijtihād* by the prophets. The third is a permission for a judge to reconsider his previous verdict if it seems incorrect.¹⁰

Verse No. 2:

And has the news of the litigants reached you? When they climbed over the wall into [Dāwūd] *Miḥrāb*.¹¹ When they entered upon Dāwūd, he was terrified of them. They said: "Fear not! [We are] two litigants, one of whom has wronged the other, therefore judge (*fa-ḥkum*) between us with truth, and treat us not with injustice, and guide us to the right way." (Q.38:21-22)

In these verses only the Prophet Dāwūd is mentioned as exercising judgement on two litigants¹² who went to him to settle the disputes between them.¹³ This was a legal judgement. The jurists have derived from these verses the ruling that a judge must listen to the other litigant after the first has completed his claim. This conforms to the tradition which says: "If two litigants sit before you, do not judge either of them until you have listened to the other."¹⁴

Verse No. 3:

O Dāwūd! We have made you a vicegerent on the earth, so judge between people in truth (*fa-ḥkum bayna l-nāsi bi-l-ḥaqq*) and do not follow desire so that it leads you astray from the way of Allah. Verily for those who go astray from the way of Allah shall have a severe punishment because they forgot the Day of Reckoning. (Q.38:26)

¹⁰ See, for example Ibn Abī al-Dam, *Adab al-qaḍā*, 77; al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 17/104-106.

¹¹ *Miḥrāb* is a praying place or a private room.

¹² Some sources say that they are the Angels. See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 10/566; al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 2/210.

¹³ The disputes are, according to Q.38:20: "Verily, this my brother [in religion] has ninety-nine ewes, while I have [only] one ewe, and he says: "Hand it over to me, and he overpowered me in speech."

¹⁴ Al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 23/190.

The verse refers to the Prophet Dāwūd. It is preceded by Q.38:21-22 which mention two disputing men who climbed over a wall to seek Dāwūd's judgement. Q.38:21-22 help one to understand Q.38:26 in which the verb *fa-ḥkum* means to judge. Nevertheless, it can mean more than just a judgement. The command *fa-ḥkum* in this verse is related to the word *khalīfa*¹⁵ which is mentioned as the role of Dāwūd. It is important to study the Qur'ānic use of *khalīfa* to understand the Prophet Dāwūd's role.

The root of *khalīfa* is *kh-l-f* which means succession. *Khalafa* means to succeed someone who came earlier, not only holding the same position but also in bearing the same responsibilities of that person. Thus *khalīfa* is the person who is appointed to that role.¹⁶

Example No. 1:

Khalīfa in its singular form appears twice in the Qur'ān in Q.2:30 and Q.38:26.

Q.2:30 reads:

And remember when your Lord said to the angels: "Verily I am going to appoint a vicegerent (*khalīfa*) on earth." They said: "Will you place therein those who will make mischief therein and shed blood while we glorify you with praises and thanks and sanctify you." He said: "I know that which you do not know."

Khalīfa in this verse means a successor to someone. Exegetes are divided into groups over the identity of the *khalīfa* here and his predecessor:

¹⁵ The meaning of *khalīfa* is a topic of debate in Qur'ānic studies, both classical and modern. One of the latest articles written on this subject is 'The Term "Khalīfa" in Early Exegetical Literature' by Wadād al-Qāḍi in *Die Welt des Islams* 28 (1988), pp. 392-411.

¹⁶ Al-Bayḍāwī says that a *khalīfa* is one who succeeds another and replaces his [position]. Al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 1/49; cf. 'Abd al-Tawwāb, *al-Dawla al-Islāmiyya*, 28.

1. The *khalīfa* here was Ādam, who succeeded the generation before him. Ādam was either a reproduction of man which was different from the previous generation in some way or he was a new creation by God to replace a generation that went before him on the earth.

2. The *khalīfa* here was the children of Ādam who replaced their father.¹⁷

As for Ādam, the exegetes differ over whom Ādam replaced when he was appointed *khalīfa*. Some say that he was the *khalīfa* of a previous generation on the earth and some say that he was *khalīfa* of God to implement His law.¹⁸ Al-Biqāʿī harmonises these two opinions by saying that both are acceptable where the *khalīfa* of God is one who implements the law entrusted by Him, and *khalīfa* of the generation before him where he succeeds them.¹⁹

Example No. 2:

Another derivation of *kh-l-f* is *khalāʾif*, which appears in Q.6:165. The verse reads:

And it is He Who has made you successors on the earth (*khalāʾifa l-ard*), and He has raised you in ranks, some above others that He may try you in that which He has bestowed on you. Surely your Lord is Swift in retribution, and certainly He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

Ibn ʿAṭiyya says that *khalāʾif*, plural of *khalīfa*, can be applied to any generation, because each generation replaces another generation.²⁰ This verse implies that this generation not only replaces the previous generation but it also continues to carry out

¹⁷ See for example al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 1/237; Riḍā, *al-Manār*, 1/258.

¹⁸ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 1/237; al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1/128.

¹⁹ Al-Biqāʿī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 1/87.

²⁰ Ibn ʿAṭiyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 2/370.

the same responsibilities. If it is assumed that the responsibility of the generation on the earth is to maintain the earth's development, the responsibility of the new generation is continue that policy. If the previous generation fails to fulfil this responsibility, it lays a burden on the new generation to redevelop its own civilisation. If this function of *khalīfa* in this verse is related to that in Q.2:30, it can be seen that the *khalīfa* is an important position in society for its development.

Example No. 3:

Khalīfa appears a second time in Q.38:26, where it is related to the obligation of passing judgement. Dāwūd is appointed as *khalīfa*: he is the *khalīfa* of either the people or the prophets who came before him.²¹ Some exegetes say that Dāwūd was appointed to the position of ruler to administer the people's affairs.²² This view is possibly more acceptable because it shows the great bounty of God to Dāwūd.²³

The role of Dāwūd as *khalīfa* can be related to kingship (*mulk*), which is mentioned earlier in Q.38:20, which reads: "We made his kingdom (*mulkahu*) strong and gave him wisdom (*ḥikma*) and sound judgement in speech and decision (*faṣl al-khiṭāb*)." This verse can be related to Q.2:251, which reads:

So they routed them by Allah's leave and Dāwūd killed Jālūt, and Allah gave him [Dāwūd] the kingdom (*mulk*) and *ḥikma*, and taught him of that which He willed. And if Allah did not check one set of people by means of another, the earth would indeed be full of mischief. But Allah is full of bounty to the universe.

These verses mention that Dāwūd was given the kingdom (*mulk*). *Mulk* is used to refer to a kingdom or the power of government. If this verse is related to Q.38:26,

²¹ This is a view of some exegetes. See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 1/237; al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 13/316.

²² Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1/128; al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 13/316.

²³ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 13/316.

then *mulk* is related to being *khalīfa*. Therefore, Dāwūd's being a *khalīfa* can be described as his possession of power, that is, he was a ruler. Being a *khalīfa* implies the authority of government, of which Q.38:26 mentions that judging is one of the main functions. However, to limit the position of Dāwūd's ruling only to the passing of judgement is to limit the scope of his authority. Therefore, *fa-ḥkum* here can imply the exercise of government which includes the office of judge as part of the *khalīfa*'s duties.²⁴ Thus a semantic meaning of ruler (*ḥākim*) in the light of the word *khalīfa* is to oversee the matters of the people, and he can be succeeded by others for this is implied in the meaning of *khalīfa*. Based on this, *khalīfa* here refers to the authority which Dāwūd enjoyed, and thus the activity of *ḥukm* here is one of the roles of the *khalīfa*. The activity of *ḥukm* also can be said to be an explanation²⁵ of the term *khalīfa* which, in this context, is designated as a *ḥākim*. The occurrence of *khalīfa* in this verse indicates that *ḥākim* here could mean a ruler, who, according to this verse, must rule in truth, and so it signifies authority. On the other hand, this verse is, as noted, also related to the preceding verse, which deals with a dispute in which Dāwūd gave his judgement (*qadā*). Therefore, *ḥukm* here can mean judgement as well as authority, the former being a direct meaning whereas the latter is a related meaning connoted by the context of the verse. Consequently, *fa-ḥkum* means "to judge" and "to rule". The latter can be related to the basic meaning of *ḥukm*, prevention, for it can be used to prevent wrong or prevent the action of other

²⁴ Cf. Al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 23/187. He says that God appointed Dāwūd as *khalīfa* to judge between the people to whom God has given power (*sulṭa*) and *ḥukm*.

²⁵ This is called *al-tafsīr* or *al-jumla al-tafsīriyya* (explanatory clause). Cf. al-Zarkashī, *al-Burhān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, 3/36-38.

authorities. Furthermore, Dāwūd enjoyed a position that gave him authority over others.

3. Judgement by the Prophet Muḥammad

The Qur'ān refers to judgement by the Prophet Muḥammad in ten verses, all of which are Medinan. One is in *Sūrat al-Baqara*, three in *Sūrat al-Nisā'*, four in *Sūrat al-Māida* and two in *Sūrat al-Nūr*. In *al-Nisā'*, the relevant verses are mentioned separately from one another whereas in *Sūrat al-Māida* and in *Sūrat al-Nūr* they appear closely to one another.

Verse No. 1:

And do not eat up others' property unjustly, nor give bribery to the judges (*ḥukkām*) that you may knowingly eat up a part of the property of others sinfully. (Q.2:188)

The Qur'ān uses the word *ḥukkām* to refer to those who pass a legal judgement. According to the occasion of the revelation, *ḥukkām* refers to the Prophet Muḥammad. Q.2:188 was revealed in connection with Imru al-Qays ibn ʿĀbis al-Kindī, who was called by Rabīʿa ibn ʿAbdān al-Ḥadramī to see the Prophet regarding a piece of land. The Prophet said to al-Ḥadramī: "Do you have any proof?" He said: "No." The Prophet said: "Then you should have his oath." He went away to make him swear an oath. The Prophet said: "If he swore that the land is his in order to obtain it unjustly, he will meet Allah in a way that Allah will reject him."²⁶ *Ḥukkām* therefore denotes those who pass legal judgement.

²⁶ Al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 1/217; al-Nisābūrī, *Asbāb al-nuzūl*, 51; cf. al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 1/107.

Verse. No. 2:

Allah commands you to render back your trusts to those to whom they are due, and when you judge (*wa idhā hakamtum*) between the people that you judge (*tahkum*) with justice: Verily how excellent is the teaching which Allah gives you. Truly, Allah is Ever All-Hearing, All-Seeing. (Q.4:58)

Q.4:58 was revealed after the Prophet entered Mecca in 8 AH/630 CE. When the Prophet wanted to enter the Kaʿba, ʿUthmān ibn Ṭalḥa ibn ʿAbd al-Dār, who held the key to it, refused to allow him to enter. ʿĀlī ibn Abī Ṭālib took the key and opened the door of the Kaʿba. The Prophet entered and performed a prayer (*ṣalāt*). When the Prophet came out, al-ʿAbbās ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭallib asked for the key. The verse was revealed in which God commanded the Prophet to return the key to ʿUthmān.²⁷ According to the occasion of the revelation of this verse, it refers to a judgement by the Prophet. However, this does not limit the application of the verse to him, for its reference is general and could apply to other people. This is understood not only because he was an example to the believers, but also because the word “you”, in the plural form, refers generally to all believers. Therefore, if the Prophet is ordered to do something, his followers are expected to follow him. On the other hand the exegetes disagree over whom the verse refers to. Al-Ṭabarī cites three different opinions: the first is those in charge of the affairs of the Muslims (*wūlat umūr al-muslimīn*); the second is the ruler (*sulṭān*); the third is the Prophet. Al-Ṭabarī concludes by saying that the verse is general, referring to those in charge of the affairs of the Muslims.²⁸

²⁷ There are many versions of the occasion of the revelation of this verse. What is given here is a summary of those versions. For details see al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 1/220; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 2/98; cf. al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ*, 4/148-9.

²⁸ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 4/147-9.

The relationship between this verse and those preceding it is, according to al-Biqāʿī, that in the previous verses God has mentioned the granting of *mulk* to the family of the Prophet Ibrāhīm and in this verse God mentions the role that the believers should play.²⁹ On the other hand, al-Rāzī says that the preceding verses refer to the attitude of the people of the Book who concealed the truth, and the believers and their rewards. Thus, this verse condemns the people of the Book and stipulates another responsibility for the believers, that is, to render the trusts.³⁰

This verse contains two obligations: the first is the rendering of trusts to those to whom they are due; and the second is judging with justice. The significance of mentioning trusts before the judging with justice is, according to some exegetes, that the Qurʾān begins with the responsibility towards one's own self before that towards others.³¹ Accordingly, the combination of trusts and judgement is to state the function of people as the servants of God.³² The Qurʾān uses the expression "verily Allah" to stress the importance of the obligations in this verse.³³

Verse No. 3:

But by your Lord they can have no faith until they make you judge
(*yuhakkimūk*) in all disputes between them and find in their souls no

²⁹ Al-Biqāʿī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 2/270. This is understood from the word *mulk* which is given to the family of the Prophet Ibrāhīm. The verse that al-Biqāʿī relates to Q.4:58 is Q.4:54: "Or do they envy men (the Prophet Muḥammad) for what Allah has given them of His bounty? Then We have already given the family of Ibrāhīm the Book and *ḥikma* and conferred upon them a great kingdom."

³⁰ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 5/259.

³¹ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 5/262; Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 3/289; al-Biqāʿī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 2/270-271.

³² Cf. Kamali says that the concept of trusts in the first part of this verse is given a concrete expression in the second part [justice]. See Mohd Hashim Kamali, 'The Limit of Power in an Islamic State' in *Islamic Studies*, 28:4, 1989, 327.

³³ Abū al-Suʿūd, *Irshād*, 1/539; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 3/62.

resistance against your decisions (*qaḍayta*) but accept them with the fullest conviction. (Q.4:65)³⁴

The verb *yuhakkim* is form II of the verb *ḥakama*, that is, *ḥakkama*. It means to seek a judgement from a person regarding a dispute in which the seeker is involved. The verbal noun is *taḥkīm*. The person who is appointed to judge is called a *ḥakam*. *Taḥkīm* was the practice of the Arabs before the coming of the Prophet. It was “the sole judicial procedure available to individuals who did not wish to exercise their right of private justice or who were unable to settle their differences by means of a direct friendly agreement.”³⁵ This semantic meaning is preserved in this verse. According to one version, the verse was revealed regarding a dispute between al-Zubayr ibn al-ʿAwwām and a man of al-Anṣār over a stream which both of them used for irrigation. The Prophet gave a judgement that al-Zubayr should irrigate his land first and then let the water go to the man from al-Anṣār. However, the man became angry and said: “Is it because he [al-Zubayr] is the Prophet’s cousin.” The Prophet’s face coloured and he said to al-Zubayr: “Irrigate your land, then withhold the water until it reaches the wall.” Al-Zubayr claimed that this verse was revealed regarding this matter.³⁶ Another version is a quarrel between a hypocrite and a Jew. The Jew wanted to seek a judgement from the Prophet but the hypocrite was unwilling. Some reports say that both of them were Jews, of whom one became Muslim and the other a hypocrite. There are different versions of the dispute. Nevertheless, al-Ṭabarī and al-Rāzī say³⁷ that the quarrel between the hypocrite and the Jew, is more likely than

³⁴ This verse was previously quoted. See above, p. 27.

³⁵ E. Tyan, ‘Ḥakam’, *E.I.*, 3/72. Cf. Moktar Djebli, ‘Taḥkīm’, *E.I.*, 10/107.

³⁶ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 4/161-2; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 2/106.

³⁷ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 4/161-162; al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 5/290; cf. al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 2/106-107.

al-Zubayr's version because of its relationship with the preceding verse, Q.4:60, which discusses those who seek judgement from *ṭāghūt*.³⁸ It was revealed concerning the dispute between a Muslim and a Jew or a hypocrite who refused to seek judgement from the Prophet. Q.4:65 explains that one of the Prophet's responsibilities was to be a judge. This judgement is related to the word *shajr*, which literally means dispute.

Verse No. 4:

We have sent down to you the Book in truth that you might judge (*li-taḥkum*) between men as guided by Allah (*bi-mā arāka llāh*) so be not [used] as an advocate by those who betray their trust. (Q.4:105)

The preceding verse speaks of fighting unbelievers, and this verse follows to remind the Prophet not to betray the unbelievers and wrongly accuse them.³⁹ The verse was revealed concerning Ṭuʿma ibn Ubayriq who had committed a theft, and to conceal the evidence he entrusted the stolen goods to a Jew to keep them for him. Investigations focused suspicion on him and the Jew, and eventually the stolen goods were retrieved from the Jew's house. The Jew said that Ṭuʿma had placed them in his custody. However, Ṭuʿma denied this and pointed to the Jew as a culprit. Ṭuʿma's clan interfered, defending Ṭuʿma. The Prophet, basing his judgement on their report, showed a certain inclination to believe Ṭuʿma and his people. The verse was revealed to intervene in the case and put the matter right.⁴⁰ The verb *taḥkum* means "to judge."

³⁸ This verse will be discussed later. See below, p. 117.

³⁹ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 5/431.

⁴⁰ Al-Nisābūrī, *Asbāb al-nuzūl*, 147; Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, *A Thematic Commentary on the Qurān*, 1/76.

The following verses are from *Sūrat al-Māida* . They appear in succession and are related to *ḥukm*, whose the root *ḥ-k-m* occurs in eight of the verses. All the verses are directly related to the judgement by the Prophet Muḥammad except Q.5:44 and Q.5:45, which refer to the judgement by prophets in general who came after the Prophet Mūsā; Q.5:46 and Q.5:47 which refer to the people of Injīl; and Q.5:50 which concludes the discussion of the verses.

Verse No. 5:

[They like to] listen to falsehood, to devour anything forbidden. So if they come to you [O Muḥammad], either judge (*fa-ḥkum*) between them, or turn away from them. If you turn away from them, they cannot hurt you in the least. And if you judge, judge (*wa in ḥakamta fa-ḥkum*) with justice between them. Verily, Allah loves those who act justly. (Q.5:42)

The occasion of the revelation of the verse is related to the preceding verse, Q.5:41, which tells of the Jews who went to the Prophet to seek his judgement. There are two different occasions of the revelation of the verse: the first is the differential retaliation (*diyya*) that existed among the Banū al-Naḍīr and the Banū Qurayza; the second is the punishment for the adultery committed by a Jewish man and woman. (Q 5:41)
Al-Qurṭubī and al-Rāzī prefer the second version.⁴¹ According to the verse, the Jews did not want to suffer the true punishment; rather they intended to obtain a lighter punishment from the Prophet. This is narrated in the following phrase: “They say: ‘If you are given this, take it, but if you are not given this, then beware!’” So when the representative of the Jews came to the Prophet, God revealed their intention to

⁴¹ Al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ*, 6/115; al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 6/23-24.

him and gave him the choice of either to judge or not.⁴² The verse, however, asks the Prophet to judge with justice if he chooses to judge between them.

Verse No. 6:

Commenting on the attitude of the Jews, Q.5:43 reproaches them, questioning their sincerity in seeking judgement though they already have their own judgement in the Torah. This means that if they refused the judgement by the Torah, whose followers they claimed to be, how would they accommodate themselves to accept the judgement of the Prophet. The verse reads:

But how do they come to you for judgement (*yuḥakkimūnak*) while they have the Torah in which is the judgement of Allah (*ḥukmu llāh*); yet even after that, they turn away. For they are not believers.⁴³

Verses Nos. 7 and 8:

The following verses, Q.5:48 and Q.5:49 end the Qur'ānic series of judgements by the Prophet Muḥammad. The verses focus on him to judge according to what God has sent down. In this regard, the Qur'ān was revealed to him as the last revelation. It is described as confirming the previous Books of God, signifying that the Qur'ān is the final Book of God. Q.5:48 reads:

And We have sent down to you the Book [the Qur'ān] in truth, confirming the scripture that came before it and as protector (*muhaymin*) over it. So judge (*fa-ḥkum*) among them by what Allah has sent down, and follow not their vain desires away from the truth that has come to you. To each among you We have prescribed a law and a clear way (*shir^catan wa minhājān*)...

⁴² The jurists have drawn some legal implications from Q.5:42. Can Muslims judge non-Muslims? If so, should they be judged according to Islamic law or not? Another implication is about bribery, understood from "to devour anything forbidden". See, for example, al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi'*, 6/119-121

⁴³ This verse has also been quoted when discussing judgement by God, see above, p. 12.

The phrase “To each among you We have prescribed a law and a clear way (*shir^catan wa minhājan*)” reminds us that to each of the prophets God has given laws and judgement for them to follow. This means that there is no alternative but to refer to the judgement by the prophets, who in turn judge according to the judgement by God. In Q.5:49, the Prophet is again asked to judge by what God has sent down. The verse reads:

And so judge (*wa ani ḥkum*) among them by what Allah has sent down and follow not their vain desires but beware of them lest they turn you far away from some of that which Allah has sent down to you. And if they turn away, then know that Allah’s Will is to punish them for some sins of theirs. And truly, most men are disobedient.

The verse again stresses from the very beginning the importance of the judgement by the Prophet according to what God has sent down. In the previous verse, it states that every prophet [including his followers] is given his own laws. However, in this verse, the importance of judgement is followed by a reminder that the Prophet should not overwhelmed by those who do not want the judgement by God to be implemented.

Verses Nos. 9 and 10:

And when they are called to Allah and His Messenger to judge (*li-yaḥkum*) between them, lo, a party of them refuses (to come) and turns away. (Q.24:48)

The only saying of the faithful when they are called to Allah and His Messenger to judge (*li-yaḥkum*) between them, is that they say: “We hear and we obey.” And such are the successful. (Q.24:51)

These two verses, are in *Sūrat al-Nūr*, represent two different attitudes of men towards seeking judgement from the Prophet: that of the hypocrites and that of the believers. Both of them are required to follow the judgement given by the Prophet. The reason for the revelation, so it is said, was that al-Mughīra had an argument with ^cAlī over water rights. ^cAlī asked him to seek judgement from the Prophet. He

refused and said: "I shall neither go to him nor I shall seek judgement from him."⁴⁴ The subject of the verb *yaḥkum* in both verses refers to the Prophet because, according to al-Bayḍāwī, the Prophet was a judge for the people and the one from whom the people were asked to seek judgement. The mention of God's name is used to exalt Him and to indicate that judgement by the Prophet is indeed judgement by God.⁴⁵ Q.24:48 shows the negative attitude of those who refuse to submit to the Prophet's judgement. The reasons are given afterward in Q.24:50: "Is there a disease in their hearts or do they doubt or fear lest Allah and His Messenger should wrong them in judgement?"

Q.24:51 shows the positive attitude of the believers who willingly submit to his judgement, whether it is in their favour or not. Thus, the jurists deduce the rule that it is important for someone, when he is called, to present himself in the court before a judge.⁴⁶

From the discussion on the Prophet Muḥammad's judgement it is clear that the root *ḥ-k-m* denotes a "legal judgement" which consequently produces laws. However, it can be argued that *ḥ-k-m* in the verses quoted above denotes "authority". In arguing this two aspects need to be considered: the context of the verses, and the background to the verses which refer to his judgement. The second aspect will be examined first.

All the verses quoted above are Medinan, that is, they were revealed after the *hijra* of the Prophet from Mecca to Medina. The Meccan and Medinan periods

⁴⁴ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 11/618; al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 18/270.

⁴⁵ Al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 2/128.

⁴⁶ See Ibn Farḥūn, *Tabṣīrat al-ḥukkām*, 1/257.

display two different aspects of the Prophet's struggle in establishing his mission, and are summarised below.

When the Prophet was in Mecca, he received a revelation, after which he started his call (*da'wa*) secretly for three years. At that time, a very small number of people accepted Islam. Then, there came the revelation ordering him to preach publicly to his people about Islam, and he started by proclaiming his faith to his kin. However, the Prophet faced much resistance and provocation from his people.

In the fifth year of his mission, the Prophet sent some of his followers to Abyssinia. Then he took step to expand his *da'wa* to the tribes who came on the pilgrimage. He met, for example, the Banū 'Āmir, the Banū Fazāra, the Banū Murra and the Banū Ḥanīfa, but they rejected him.

In the eleventh year, he went out to the tribes during the pilgrimage and met six youths of Khazraj from Medina who accepted his *da'wa*. The next year, twelve men of Aws and Khazraj came to Mecca during the pilgrimage and gave their oath of obedience to the Prophet. This agreement was a starting-point for the Prophet to consider a new place for the Muslims to practise their religion after Mecca and Abyssinia had proved to be unsuitable. In the following year, a group consisting of about seventy people from Medina came and swore the oath of obedience to the Prophet during the pilgrimage. These oaths of obedience at least made a basis for a new land for Muslims, where the people of Medina agreed to obey and assist the Prophet. Following this event he gave permission to his followers to emigrate to Medina and he followed them later.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ See al-Nabḥān, *Niẓām al-ḥukm*, 85-6; Khalīl, *Niẓām al-ḥukm*, 21-7.

After the Prophet arrived in Medina, he built a mosque which later became a place not only for the rituals but also for administration, discussion and teaching. He joined the *Muhājirūn* (the emigrants) to the *Anṣār* (the helpers, i.e. the people of Medina) and made them into a brotherhood. He made an agreement with the people of Medina, consisting of Muslims and non-Muslims (especially the Jews), which could be regarded as a sound guideline binding all the inhabitants. The Prophet took charge of internal affairs like settling disputes, giving a *fatwā* and collecting alms (*zakāt*), and he also took charge of external affairs like sending letters to foreign leaders and rulers.⁴⁸ All these things were achieved gradually. Thus the Prophet became experienced as a ruler in this new land for the Muslims⁴⁹ and Medina gradually became a strong centre for Islamic political authority at that time. Medina also became a model for a new state in Arabia in which three fundamental elements of a state were exercised: nation, region and political authority.⁵⁰

Throughout his rule in Medina, the Qur'ānic verses containing laws and rulings were revealed, including *Sūras al-Nisā'* and *al-Māida*. Judgement by the Prophet not only shows that he was a judge for the people of Medina but also that it was one of the important duties carried out by him as a ruler in Medina. Those verses, therefore, reveal a particular aspect adjudication of the authority that the Prophet enjoyed in Medina. If the Prophet Dāwūd was a ruler [king] and a judge

⁴⁸ See Khalīl, *Nizām al-ḥukm*, 27; °Abd al-Tawwāb, *al-Dawla al-Islāmiyya*, 12.

⁴⁹ Cf. Duncan B. MacDonald, *Development of Muslim Theology, Jurisprudence and Constitutional Theory*, 9; John L. Esposito, *Islam The Straight Path*, 8-11.

⁵⁰ See for example al-Nabhān, *Nizām al-ḥukm*, 87,139,144; cf. Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī, *Min fiqh al-dawla fi-l-Islām*, 16; cf. MacDonald, *Development of Muslim Theology, Jurisprudence and Constitutional Theory*, 67. Classical Muslim scholars did not concern themselves about the definition of a state and this attitude is followed by some modern scholars. Only a small group of the latter even define state according to its principles. See °Alī Muḥammad Ḥasanayn, *Riqābat al-umma*, 44-45.

whose judgement was a part of his rule, so too was the judgement by the Prophet Muḥammad a part of his rule. Even though he was not a king like the Prophet Dāwūd, both of them possessed the authority to give judgement. Therefore, there does not seem to be an obstacle to suggesting that the root *ḥ-k-m*, in the verses referring to judgement by the Prophet, denotes authority. Furthermore, the meaning of *ḥukm* as authority is not a remote meaning of the root *ḥ-k-m* because it can be related to the basic meaning of *ḥukm*, prevention. If judgement is used to prevent injustice, authority can also be used for the same purpose.

The two recognisable contextual verses are considered next. As stated above, Q.4:58 was revealed in the year of 8 AH/630 CE. In this year the authority of the Prophet had increased after the conquest of Mecca, as shown by his judgement that the key to Kaʿba should be handed over to its original owner. Clearly the Prophet was exercising his authority to give a judgement. The verse reminds him to be fair in ruling his people and this requires him to be fair in using his authority to give judgement. Hence the phrase “and when you judge between the people” refers to the authority exercised by those who judge. This, as al-Biqāʿī expresses above regarding the relationship of Q.4:58 to the verses preceding it, signifies that *ḥukm* denotes “authority of ruling”, not simply “judgement”. This verse is relevant not only in particular judgements (*qaḍāʾ*), but also in the wider context of establishing the ideals of a community and the principles by which it might be ruled.⁵¹

Q.4:59 shows a strong relationship to the preceding verse. The verse reads:

O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those who are in charge of you. And if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger, if you believe in Allah and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination.

⁵¹ Cf. Al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 5/120, 124. Al-Zuḥaylī accepts this verse as part of the Islamic system of governance (*niẓām al-ḥukm fī-l-Islām*).

Q.4:58 reflects the responsibility of those who exercise authority whereas Q.4:59 points out the duty of the ruled. This duty is to obey those who are in charge of the affairs of the people. The verse refers to ʿAbd Allah ibn Ḥudhāfa ibn Qays ibn ʿAdī, whom the Prophet sent to lead the Muslim army. During the night he ordered the army to throw themselves into the fire and they refused to do so.⁵² Though it refers to the troop leader, the term *ulū-l-amr*, which denotes those who are in charge of the affairs, includes also rulers and religious scholars: for instance, al-Zajjāj is reported as saying that *ulū-l-amr* is a general expression which includes those who are in charge of religious affairs and the welfare of the people.⁵³ The exegetes have therefore derived from this verse the fact that it is targeted at the majority of the community (*jumhūr al-umma*), which includes rulers (*ḥukkām*), governors (*wulāt*), administrators and judges (*quḍā*).⁵⁴ Al-Rāzī tries to establish the idea of authority, as understood from his statement:⁵⁵

This verse is a statement of the fact that not all men are responsible for taking charge of the implementation of *ḥukm*, but this responsibility is carried by some of them. The verse functions as a general concept (*mujmal*) that someone becomes a *ḥākim*. Other verses indicate that it is inevitable that the community must have a leader (*imām*) and that he is responsible for appointing judges (*al-quḍā*) and administrators (*al-wulā*) in a country. These indications (*dalāil*) are an explanation of the general concept [of leadership] in this verse.

Al-Rāzī relates Q.4:58 to other verses which discuss leadership in a community. He also seems to relate *ḥākim* to *imām*. The latter, as understood from the statement

⁵² Al-Biqāʿī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 2/272.

⁵³ Al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-taʾwīl*, 2/102. Cf. ʿAbd al-Tawwāb, *al-Dawla al-Islāmiyya*, 26.

⁵⁴ Al-Zuhaylī, *Tafsīr*, 5/124. See also al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 4/149; al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ*, 5/167. Ibn al-ʿArabī says that *ḥukm* in this verse concerns generally those who hold the rule and people. See Ibn al-ʿArabī, 1/572.

⁵⁵ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 5/265.

above, denotes authority to rule. However, he does not mention which verses in his view support Q.4:58. Perhaps what he means by “other verses” is Q.4:59, which discusses the need for the community to obey God, the Prophet and those who take charge of their affairs. This verse implies that if the Qur’ān has imposed obedience to rulers, this shows that there is an obligation to produce rulers who with their fellows, take charge of the affairs of the people. Otherwise this imposition by the Qur’ān would have no meaning. Hence, Q.4:59, which refers to the aspect of government, elucidates the idea of government implied in Q.4:58.

The second verse is Q.4:65, which is more explicit, in emphasising the Prophet’s status as someone who has the authority to adjudicate in disputes. The verse forces the people of Medina to go to the Prophet for his judgement, for they have no choice but to submit to him. The verb “*yuḥakkimūk*” indicates his authoritative status in Medina at that time. The judgement by the Prophet was authoritative and required implementation. So judgement is closely related to “authority”, which denotes “the power or right to enforce obedience”. Authority in turn is related to “ruling”, which includes “an authoritative decision”.⁵⁶ It is argued, therefore, that the Prophet not only acted as a judge but was also a ruler and leader in Medina, and one of his duties was to adjudicate cases. The authority of the Prophet not only emerges from the knowledge of his practice but is also confirmed by the Qur’ān. Thus, Q.4:65 emphasises the need to make the Prophet a judge (*yuḥakkimūk*), and there is no escape from his judgement. The phrase “By your Lord”, an oath in the name of God, strengthens the force of the ideas in this verse.

⁵⁶ Cf. Thompson, *Oxford Dictionary*, 42.

The application of this verse is general.⁵⁷ It applied not only to the believers but also to everyone who was under the Prophet's authority as understood from the occasion of the revelation. The verse underlines three fundamentals of belief: the seeking of judgement from the Prophet; satisfaction with the judgement; and acceptance of the judgement without any doubt.⁵⁸ The verse denies the status of a believer to those who do not exhibit these characteristics.

To sum up, judgement by the Prophet Muḥammad usually means legal judgement. However, contextual considerations indicate that the Qur'ān tries to emphasise another meaning of judgement, namely "authority". Q.2:188, Q.4:58, 105, Q.5:42, 48 and 49 command the Prophet to judge, whereas Q.4:65, Q.5:43, Q.24:48 and Q.24:51 discuss the people's response to the Prophet's judgement. The fact that Muslims cannot flee from his judgement is proof of the "authority" which is manifested in it.

4. Judgement by people in general

There are two verses, Q.4:35 and Q.5:95, which refer to judgement by men in general. The verses read:

But if you fear a breach between the two, set up an arbiter (*ḥakam*) from his people and an arbiter (*ḥakam*) from her people; if they desire to set the matter right, Allah will bring agreement between them; verily Allah is Ever All-Knowing, Well-Acquainted. (Q.4:35)

O you who believe! Do not kill the game [wild animals] while you are in a state of *iḥrām*, and whosoever of you kills it intentionally, the penalty is an offering, brought to the *Ka'ba*, of an edible animal equivalent to the one he killed, as adjudged (*yaḥkum*) by two just men among you. (Q.5:95)

⁵⁷ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 4/161-162; al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 5/290; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 2/106-107.

⁵⁸ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 5/292-293; al-Zuhaylī, *Tafsīr*, 5/139.

Ḥakam signifies an arbiter who is appointed to settle a dispute. In this case, it seems that the position of arbiter does not exist permanently but only when there is a dispute and someone is chosen. The verse concerns marital discord and in this context a legal judgement because it deals with the legal aspect of marriage and thus gives the idea of *ḥakam* as someone who passes judgement.

This verse can also be compared to Q.4:65. Both verses point out the function of *taḥkīm*, that is, the appointment of an arbiter, who is sought by two disputing parties to give a judgement and settle their differences.⁵⁹ Q.4:35 refers to the appointed *ḥakam*, but Q.4:65 refers to the Prophet as an existing *ḥakam*.⁶⁰

In Q.5:95, the verb *yaḥkum* refers to two just men, who are required to act as judges, in a case of killing animals during *iḥrām*. It is narrated that a Bedouin came to see Abū Bakr and said: "I have done such and such to the game." Abū Bakr asked Ubay ibn Ka'b about it. The Bedouin said: "I came and asked you but you are asking another person." Abū Bakr said: "You cannot object to that. Allah has said: 'as adjudged by two just men among you,' so I discussed it with my companion. If we agree on something [decision], we will order it [to be executed]."⁶¹ The verse shows the necessity of a judge being just (*ʿādil*).⁶²

As for the root *ḥ-k-m*, in these two verses it denotes "judgement", that is legal judgement. The verses above point out the necessity of adjudication in Muslim

⁵⁹ See Ibn Farḥūn, *Tabṣirat al-ḥukkām*, 1/50; al-Zuḥaylī, *al-Fiqh al-Islāmī wa adillatuh*, 6/756; Shawkat Muḥammad ʿUlyān, *al-Sulṭa al-qaḍāʾiyya*, 460.

⁶⁰ The jurists draw various implications from these verses. For their discussion see for example Ibn Farḥūn, *Tabṣirat al-ḥukkām*, 1/50; ʿUlyān, *al-Sulṭa al-qaḍāʾiyya*, 462; cf. Ibn Abī al-Dam, *Adab al-qaḍāʾ*, 122-3.

⁶¹ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 6/145; cf. al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ*, 6/201.

⁶² The jurists have deduced from this verse the rules for witnesses. See, for example, Ibn Abī al-Dam, *Adab al-qaḍāʾ*, 313.

communities. In short, the judgement shows that the Qur'ān is concerned with maintaining a just social order.

5. Judgement by the people of the Injīl.

Q.5:46 and Q.5:47 refer to the people of the Injīl. The verses read:

And in their footsteps, We sent 'Īsā son of Maryam, confirming the Torah that had come before him and We gave him the Injīl, in which were guidance and light and confirmation of the Torah that had come before it, a guidance and an admonition for the pious. Let the people of the Injīl judge (*wa-l-yahkum*) by what Allah has sent down therein, and whoever does not judge (*yahkum*) by what Allah has sent down, such people are the disobedient (*fāsiqūn*).

These verses follow the one which mentions that in the Torah God has laid down the law of retaliation. The verses continue to speak of the Injīl, for Q.5:46 acknowledges that the Injīl has guidance and light, and gives admonition to the pious as well as being a confirmation of the Torah. Consequently, Q.5:47 commands the people of the Injīl to judge by what Allah has sent down. Hence the verb *wa-l-yahkum* means to "judge".⁶³

B. Judgement not in accordance with the Qur'ān

Judgement not in accordance with the Qur'ān, which is in contrast to what the Qur'ān seeks to uphold, is referred to in the Qur'ān in four different ways: The first is illustrated by the phrases "evil is the way they judge" (*sā'a mā yahkumūn*) and "How do you judge" (*kayfa tahkumūn*). The second is the *ḥukm* of the *Jāhiliyya*, the third is the *ḥukm* of *ṭāghūt* and the fourth is the phrase "whoever does not judge by what God has sent down..." The first of these is judgement by wrongdoers.

⁶³ The last phrase "whoever does not judge by what Allah has sent down" will be discussed later. See below pp. 119, 128, 131.

1. Judgement by wrongdoers

There are eight verses pertaining to judgement by wrongdoers, all of which are Meccan. This wrong judgement is represented not by innocent believers but by disobedient men, in particular unbelievers. Judgement in this context means “general judgement” rather than “legal judgement”.

Examples Nos.1 and 2:

And they assign to Allah a share of the tilth and cattle which He has created and they say: “This is for Allah according to their claim, and this is for our partners.” But the share of their partners reaches not Allah, while the share of Allah reaches their partners. Evil is that which they judge (*yaḥkumūn*). (Q.6:136)

Say: “Is there of your partners one that guides to the truth?” Say: “Is it Allah Who guides to the truth more worthy to be followed, or he who finds not guidance unless he is guided? Then what is the matter? How do you judge (*taḥkumūn*)?” (Q.10:35)⁶⁴

The men referred to here are those who indulge in mischief and disobedience, including unbelievers. The first verse describes unbelievers who made idols as partners of God and on which they spent their wealth. The Qur’ān blames them and regards their judgement as an evil judgement. Therefore, the verb *yaḥkumūn* means “they judge”. This judgement emerges from their view that what they were doing was right.

Q.10:35 also carries the same idea since the verse implies that it was a wrong judgement that the unbelievers made in having partners with God as a means of guidance. Following God is stated as following the guidance, and following idols is stated as following those who have no guidance. So, the judgement of the

⁶⁴ See also Q.16:59; 29:4; 37:154; 45:21; 68:36, 39.

unbelievers to follow those who had no guidance is regarded as evil. These two verses stress that it is wrong and misguided to oppose what God has decided for men, by following something else. This contrasts with the practice of the believers who follow what God has laid down.

Other verses also state this, albeit in different ways.

Example No. 3:

He hides himself from the people because of the evil of that whereof he has been informed. Shall he keep her with dishonour or bury her in the earth? Certainly evil is that which they judge (*yaḥkumūn*). (Q.16:59)

Though this was a practice of the unbelievers before the advent of Islam, the verse highlights the criminality of those who rejected the decision of God to give them daughters and reacted by burying the babies alive.

Example No. 4:

Or think those who do evil deeds that they can outstrip Us [i.e. escape Our punishment]?⁶⁵ Evil is that which they judge (*yaḥkumūn*)! (Q.29:4)

The Qur'ān points out to those who disbelieve in God and work mischief that nobody can be delivered from God's judgement either in this world or in the Hereafter. Since disbelief and mischief are the result of not following what God has decided, such an attitude is regarded as wrong.

The above verses demonstrate that a judgement which defies God's commands is wrong. The only right choice available to humankind is to follow the judgement by God. This suggests that people's thinking must conform to God's decision.

⁶⁵ See al-Bayḏāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 2/201.

2. The *ḥukm* of the *jāhiliyya*

In determining the application of the law of God, the Qurʾān raises the issue of the *ḥukm* of the *Jāhiliyya*. This occurs in Q.5:50, which reads:⁶⁶

Do they then seek the *ḥukm* of the *Jāhiliyya*? But who is better in judgement (*ḥukman*) than Allah for a people who certainly believe.

This verse follows a series of *ḥukm*-verses, which classify those who refuse to accept the law of God as *kāfirūn*, *ẓālimūn*, and *fāsiqūn*, and command the Prophet to judge according to what God has sent down. Q.5:50 classifies seeking judgement outside the law of God as the *ḥukm* of the *Jāhiliyya*. To understand this classification fully, it is necessary to examine the meaning of *Jāhiliyya* in the Qurʾān.

The word *jāhiliyya*⁶⁷ comes from the root *jīm*, *hā'* and *lām*, which literally means "ignorance", being the opposite of knowledge.⁶⁸ Al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī says that *jahl*, the verbal noun of the verb *jahala*, has three meanings: lack of knowledge; believing something to be different from what it is; and doing something in a manner different from that in which it ought to be done.⁶⁹ *Jahl* also denotes a sense of negligence which contrasts with knowledge, and is therefore related to another term, *safah*. *Safah* contrasts with *ḥilm* for the former signifies lightness and is related to *jahl* in its sense of a deficiency in intellect or understanding which induces someone to act unreasonably and unlawfully. *Safah* is the opposite of forbearance, which is

⁶⁶ This verse has also been quoted before when discussing judgement by God, see above, p. 18.

⁶⁷ One of the earliest discussions in a European language of *Jāhiliyya* is Ignaz Goldziher 'Muslim Studies', Vol. 1, trans. from *Muhamedanische Studien*, 201-8. For details of the occurrences of the root *j-h-l* in the Qurʾān, see al-Shamma, *The Ethical System*, 11.

⁶⁸ *Tahdhīb al-lisān*, 1/213; Lane, *Lexicon*, 1/477.

⁶⁹ Al-Rāghib, *al-Mufradāt*, 102; Lane, *Lexicon*, 1/477.

one meaning of *ḥilm*.⁷⁰ Hence, *jahl* implies a state of pride and rashness which contrasts with knowledge. The following verse distinguishes between *jahl* and *ʿilm*, and *safah* and *ḥilm*.

There is no knowledge when a knowledgeable man acts ignorantly

And there is no good conduct when a mild man acts the fool⁷¹

Before discussing the concept of the *jāhiliyya* in the Qurʾān, it is important to understand the Qurʾānic meaning of *jahl*.

Example No. 1:

[Charity] is for the poor, who in Allah's cause are restricted [from travel], and cannot move about in the land. The one who knows them not (*al-jāhil*), thinks that they are rich because of their modesty (*taʿaffuf*). You may know them by their mark, they do not beg of people at all. And whatever you spend in good, surely, Allah knows it well. (Q.2:273)

In this verse *jāhil* shows the basic meaning of *jahl*, which is ignorance in the sense of lacking knowledge. However, the use of *jāhil* here suggests not only one who does not know but also one who fails to judge correctly, owing to his superficial knowledge of the matter. According to Izutsu, *jāhil* implies "the incapacity of the mind to have a deep understanding of things which consequently produces a shallow and rash judgement on everything."⁷² Therefore al-Shamma's hypothesis that *jāhil* here implies no more than the primitive neutral sense, that is foolishness and rashness, is open to question. He argues that modesty (*taʿaffuf*) is a good quality and is thus in contrast to *jāhil*.⁷³ In fact, modesty is used in this verse to reflect the

⁷⁰ Lane, *Lexicon*, 1/1377.

⁷¹ *Fa-lā ʿilma idhā jahila l-ʿalīm walā rushda idhā safiha l-ḥalīm*. See Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 1/565.

⁷² Izutsu, *God and Man*, 212-3.

⁷³ Al-Shamma, *The Ethical System*, 8-9.

characteristics of the poor, whom the ignorant fail to understand, not to explain the characteristics of the ignorant.

Example No. 2:

However, good behaviour is used in contrast to the characteristics of the ignorant, as in Q.25:63, which reads:

And the slaves of the Most Gracious (*ʿibād al-Raḥmān*) are those who walk on the earth in humility, and when the ignorant (*jāhilūn*) address them they reply back with mild words of gentleness.

The ignorance of the *jāhilūn* contrasts with the forbearance of the *ʿibād al-Raḥmān*: when the former reveal their poor attitude, the latter respond graciously. In this sense we see that *jahl* denotes bad behaviour, in contrast to the *ḥilm*, practised by the *ʿibād al-Raḥmān*.

Another derivative of *j-h-l* is *jahāla*, which occurs twice in the Qurʾān, in a Meccan and Medinan verses.

Example No. 3:

When those who believe in Our signs come to you, say: "Peace be upon you." Your Lord has written mercy for Himself, so that if any of you does evil in ignorance (*bi-jahāla*), and thereafter repents and does righteous good deeds then surely He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Q.6:54)

Al-Bayḍāwī says that *jahāla* here can mean ignorance of the unpleasant consequences, such as the punishment for committing evil. Alternatively, it can describe the evil actions themselves.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ Al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 1/303.

Example No. 4:

Further commentaries by exegetes on *jahāla* can be found concerning Q.4:17, which reads:

Allah accepts only the repentance of those who commit evil in ignorance (*bi-jahāla*) and repent soon afterwards; it is they whom Allah will forgive and Allah is Ever All-Knowing, All-Wise.

Jahāla here refers to the fact that committing evil deeds is motivated by foolishness and desire.⁷⁵ Qatāda claims that the Companions agreed that any disobedience was regarded as *jahāla*, whether it was intentional or not. According to Ibn ʿAbbās, this is because a person who commits evil does not take advantage of his knowledge of reward and punishment.⁷⁶ However, al-Ṭabarī offers a more convincing discussion in which he lists three definitions of *jahāla* from early scholars: committing an evil deed; committing evil intentionally; or committing evil in this life.⁷⁷ Al-Ṭabarī chooses to say that *jahāla* is committing an evil deed, whether it is intentional or not. He argues that the Arabs do not term one who intentionally commits evil as ignorant unless he is unaware of the advantages and disadvantages of such a deed. If he has this knowledge and intentionally commits evil, he should not be considered ignorant. Thus, the person who knowingly commits evil is termed ignorant on the basis that he acts wrongly in the same way as the ignorant person.

Al-Ṭabarī refutes the opinion, also found in al-Bayḍāwī as mentioned above, which says that *jahāla* is ignorance of unpleasant consequences. Al-Ṭabarī argues that this would mean that repentance from someone aware of the consequences of evil would not be accepted. Furthermore, it would contradict the tradition of the

⁷⁵ Al-Zamakhshārī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1/478.

⁷⁶ Al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-taʾwīl*, 2/34.

⁷⁷ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 3/640-1.

Prophet, which says that repentance is acceptable, and also contradict the Qur'ān.⁷⁸ Thus in his view, *jahāla* is a condition ascribed to those who commit evil because they are considered the same as the ignorant person who commits evil.

Example No. 5:

The next verse shows that ignorance is reflected in deeds. Thus, we read:

And remember when Mūsā said to his people : “Verily Allah commands you to slaughter a cow.” They said: “Do you make fun of us?” He said: “I take refuge in Allah from being among the ignorant (*al-jāhilīn*).” (Q.2:67)

This verse describes the attitude of Mūsā’s followers, who regarded his command as amusing, which shows that they did not want to obey. *Jāhilīn* here means that they did not understand that it was a command from God. Nevertheless, the use of *jāhilīn* implies that *jahl* can mean not knowing the significance of an action, resulting in doing something different from what should be done. Al-Alūsī tries to argue for this implicit meaning. He says that *jahl* means doing something differently from what should be done whether or not someone has a strong reason for his action.⁷⁹

In the following verses the derivatives of *j-h-l* suggest a meaning other than ignorance or rashness, that is, an action departing from the right way.

Example No. 6:

And if you call them to guidance, they hear not and you will see them looking at you yet they see not. Show forgiveness, enjoin what is good and turn away from the ignorant (*al-jāhilīn*). (Q.7:198-9)

⁷⁸ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 3/641-2. He quotes an example from the Qur'ān, Q.25:70, which reads: “Except those who repent and believe and do righteous deeds; for those Allah will change their sins into good deeds and Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”

⁷⁹ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 1/286.

Q.7:198 describes the attitude of the Prophet's opponents in rejecting his mission and guidance. Q.7:199 teaches the Prophet the proper behaviour, that is, to turn away from the ignorant, to forgive them and enjoin what is good. The ignorant in this context are those who do not pay attention to the Prophet's guidance. The verse implies, therefore, that the ignorant (*jāhilīn*) are the people who act without regard for the right way.

Example No. 7:

And [remember] Lūṭ when he said to his people: "Do you commit evil while you see. Do you practise your lusts on men instead of women? Nay but you are a people [grossly] ignorant (*tajhalūn*)."⁸⁰ (Q.27:54-5)

According to Izutsu, the people of Lūṭ are described here as behaving in "a characteristically *jāhil* way", approaching "men lustfully rather than women" which is "an abominable sin (*fāḥisha*)".⁸⁰ Their lustful attitude is in contrast to the method and teaching brought by the Prophet Lūṭ,⁸¹ and so they are regarded in the same way as those who act ignorantly. The verse indicates that *jahl* here represents something that is not according to the right method, that is against the guidance and revelation brought by the prophet.⁸²

The above discussion shows that there are four linked meanings of *jahl* in the Qur'ān. The most literal of these is lacking knowledge and that furthest removed from the literal meaning is action different from the right way.

Lack of knowledge → Failure to know the truth → Rashness → Action different from the right way

⁸⁰ Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts*, 32.

⁸¹ See Shams al-Dīn, *Bayna l-jāhiliyya wa-l-Islām*, 241.

⁸² Abū al-Su'ūd, *Irshād*, 4/207; al-Biqā'ī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 5/434; al-Zuhaylī, *Tafsīr*, 19/323.

Jāhiliyya occurs four times in the Qur'ān which describes the conditions of the Prophet Muḥammad. This signifies that the Qur'ān uses *jāhiliyya* exclusively during his time, and other derivatives in his time and that of others. This could indicate that the Qur'ān devotes much attention to the concept of *jāhiliyya* for the Prophet's people. Since he was the last prophet and the Qur'ān is the final revelation, the latter tries to make the Muslims fully aware of this concept so that they are always on the right path approved by the Qur'ān.

The word *jāhiliyya* appears in the Qur'ān in combination with different nouns which become its prefix: *ẓann*, *ḥukm*, *tabarruj* and *ḥamiyya*. Each noun has a different meaning. The ascribing of these nouns to *jāhiliyya* shows that it is not an attribute of them but a basis on which they are founded,⁸³ which means that they are the result of *jāhiliyya*. If we assume that there are two types of *ẓann* - *jāhiliyya* and Islam,- they mean something different from each other. This implies that *jāhiliyya* is a system based on a particular standard of living and behaviour. The use of *jāhiliyya* shows a criterion of human kind which is totally different from that emphasised in Islam.

(a) *Ẓann al-jāhiliyya*

This phrase appears in Q.3:154 which reads:

Then after the distress, He sent down security for you. Slumber overtook a party of you, while another party was thinking about themselves and thought wrongly of Allah, the thinking of ignorance (*ghayra l-ḥaqq ẓanna l-jāhiliyya*). They said: "Have we any part in the affair?" Say: "Indeed the affair belongs wholly to Allah." They hide within themselves what they dare not reveal to you saying: "If we had anything to do with the affair, none of us would have been killed here." Say: "Even if you had remained in your homes, those for whom death was decreed would certainly have gone forth to the place of their death," but that Allah might test what is in

⁸³ This idea is suggested by Shams al-Dīn, *Bayna l-jāhiliyya wa-l-Islām*, 245.

your breasts and to purify that which was in your hearts and Allah is All-Knower of what is in the breasts.

This verse describes the mental attitude of the Prophet's followers after the battle of Uhud. The exegetes claim that they are the hypocrites,⁸⁴ who think that by becoming Muslim they will certainly obtain help from God without any need for effort on their parts. God reproaches the hypocrites by stating that whatever happens in the world is due to the principle of causality.⁸⁵ Therefore, the Muslims' failure to claim victory over their Meccan enemies was due to their weakness in failing to follow the Prophet's plan.

In the phrase *ghayra l-ḥaqq ḡanna l-jāhiliyya, ḡanna l-jāhiliyya* is an appositional substantive standing for *ghayra l-ḥaqq*. This implies that the *ḡann* of the hypocrites was not based on truth.⁸⁶ If they were true and right-thinking believers, they would not say it. It shows that this attitude is the opposite of how they should behave as Muslims and that *jāhiliyya* is a concept which is in contrary to Islam.

(b) *Ḥukm al-jāhiliyya*

Q.5:50 contains the phrase '*ḥukm al-jāhiliyya*'. The verse reads:

Do they then seek the *ḥukm* of the ignorance and who is better in judgement (*ḥukman*) than Allah for a people who certainly believe?⁸⁷

The exegetes give two possible meanings for this phrase: the *ḥukm* of the religion of ignorance (*al-milla al-jāhiliyya*) and the *ḥukm* of the people of ignorance. The former means that this *ḥukm* is based on desires and ignorance not taken from

⁸⁴ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 3/486; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-ta'wīl*, 1/562.

⁸⁵ Shams al-Dīn, *Bayna l-jāhiliyya wa-l-Islām*, 248.

⁸⁶ Cf. Al-Shamma, *The Ethical System*, 9.

⁸⁷ See also above, pp. 18, 104.

revelation, and the latter refers to the inherited practice of the Arabs before the advent of Islam, meaning unfair judgement between two disputing parties.⁸⁸ Limiting the meaning of *jāhiliyya* to a historic tradition cannot give a clear understanding of what the Qur'ān tries to expound about the *ḥukm al-jāhiliyya*. Even though the occasion of the revelation was the unfair decision on the blood money in a case of retaliation,⁸⁹ this verse continues a theme already emphasised earlier in the Qur'ān. The command to apply the *ḥukm* of God is opposed by those who refuse to accept the *ḥukm* of God which is followed by the phrase *ḥukm al-jāhiliyya*. As a response to the Qur'ānic question of *ḥukm al-jāhiliyya*, the Qur'ān tries to establish that there is no *ḥukm* better than that of God

The practice of the Jews of giving unfair judgement is deemed to contradict the Qur'ānic concept of justice, and is considered to be an attitude of *jāhiliyya*. This is akin to al-Shamma's view that this verse describes the *jāhilitic* form of justice as based on lust or partiality. According to him this implies two different types of justice, the *jāhilitic* and the Qur'ānic.⁹⁰ Therefore the *ḥukm* of the *jāhiliyya* is not solely a historic concept but one in opposition to Islam.⁹¹

On the other hand the word *ḥukm* here means judgement. But, as suggested before, the *ḥukm* of God also denotes His authority, the *ḥukm* of the *Jāhiliyya* denotes the authority of the *Jāhiliyya*.

⁸⁸ Abū al-Su'ūd, *Irshād*, 2/53; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 3/323-4; Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 3/516.

⁸⁹ Based on one version of the occasions of the revelation.

⁹⁰ Al-Shamma, *The Ethical System*, 10.

⁹¹ Cf. Shams al-Dīn, *Bayna l-jāhiliyya wa-l-Islām*, 249, 250; Aḥmad, Amīn, *al-Jāhiliyya qadīman wa ḥadīthan*, 240; Quṭb, *Ẓilāl*, 2/905.

(c) *Tabarruj al-jāhiliyya*.

The phrase *tabarruj al-jāhiliyya al-ūlā* appears in Q.33:33. Thus we read:

And stay in your houses, and do not display yourselves as in the times of ignorance (*al-jāhiliyya al-ūlā*), and perform *ṣalat* and give *zakat* and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah wishes only to remove evil deeds (*al-rijs*) from you, O family of the house [of the Prophet], and to purify you with a thorough purification.

Tabarruj in this verse stems from *jāhiliyya*. In this verse, the Qur'ān uses *ūlā* as an attribute of *jāhiliyya*, implying that there is a historic age of *jāhiliyya* divided into two: *ūlā* (earlier) and *ukhrā* (later). This is understood by the earlier exegetes who trace *ūlā* back to the classical period of the Prophets Ādam and Nūḥ,⁹² and *ukhrā* to the time before the coming of the Prophet Muḥammad. There is also the opinion that *ūlā* refers to the time before Islam, and *ukhrā* to the Islamic period.⁹³

However, Ibn ʿAṭiyya holds the view that *jāhiliyya al-ūlā* refers to the period before Islam, when many women behaved badly, and this does not mean that there is another *jāhiliyya*, that is, *ukhrā*.⁹⁴ Al-Qurṭubī supports this view, adding that one meaning of this verse is that one's behaviour should be different from that of the women who lived before Islam.⁹⁵

(d) *Ḥamiyyat al-jāhiliyya*

The fourth instance of *jāhiliyya* is *ḥamiyyat al-jāhiliyya* which appears in Q.48:26.

Thus, we read:

⁹² According to some of them, it is Idrīs and Nūḥ or Ibrāhīm or Dāwūd and Sulaymān. See, for example, Abū al-Suʿūd, *Irshād*, 4/320.

⁹³ Abū al-Suʿūd, *Irshād*, 4/320.

⁹⁴ Ibn ʿAṭiyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 4/384; al-Baghāwī, *Maʿālim*, 5/37; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 5/37.

⁹⁵ Al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ*, 4/117.

When those who disbelieved had put in their hearts pride (*ḥamiyya*), the pride of ignorance (*ḥamiyyat al-jāhiliyya*), then Allah sent down His composure (*sakīna*) upon His Messenger and upon the believers, and made them stick to the word of piety, and they were well entitled to it and worthy of it. And Allah is the All-Knower of everything.

Ḥamiyya is a result of anger that creates in the self the zeal to defend what one has to defend.⁹⁶ *Ḥamiyya* itself is not necessarily a bad characteristic for it can be good if it is used in the right way. This is implied here when *ḥamiyya* is used for the first time. However, it is followed by *ḥamiyyat al-jāhiliyya*, and the addition of *jāhiliyya* shows that *ḥamiyya* is bad when used for the wrong purpose.⁹⁷ Therefore, some exegetes say that this is the wrong use of *ḥamiyya*, for it is without concrete support and is based on fanatical bias.⁹⁸ This *ḥamiyya* is a spontaneous reaction which pushes a man to defend his own side and to deny the right of others rights because of differences in beliefs and practices.⁹⁹ Thus it was *ḥamiyyat al-Jāhiliyya* that pushed the Meccans to deny the Prophet and his followers the right to enter their homeland. In contrast, the Qur'ān, in response to this *ḥamiyya*, reveals that the Prophet and his followers were given self-control and tranquillity (*sakīna*).

Ḥamiyya in this verse is contrary to *sakīna*, both of which represent two different attitudes. When *ḥamiyya* is attached to *jāhiliyya*, it implies that *ḥamiyya* is the result of man's failure to use his wisdom,¹⁰⁰ which leads him to behave inappropriately. *Sakīna* implies man's capability to use his wisdom, followed by the appropriate action, namely, good behaviour. *Ḥamiyyat al-jāhiliyya* in this verse is

⁹⁶ Izutsu, *God and Man*, 201.

⁹⁷ Al-Biqā'ī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 7/211.

⁹⁸ Al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi'*, 16/190; Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīt*, 8/98; al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 26/192.

⁹⁹ Shams al-Dīn, *Bayna l-jāhiliyya wa-l-Islām*, 251.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Al-Shamma, *The Ethical System*, 10.

represented by the unbelievers, and *sakīna* by the believers. This representation suggests that *jāhiliyya* is contrary to belief, and therefore contravenes the practices and principles approved by Islam.

From this discussion, the following points can be made:

1. *Jāhiliyya* is not restricted to the literal meaning of *jahl* (ignorance) but includes a concept that is totally different from Islam. It is not confined to the pre-Islamic era when the Arabs were lacking revelation, but can be applied to anything that contradicts Islam at any time.¹⁰¹
2. These four verses on *jāhiliyya* expose four aspects of man: his relationship with God, the law, social relation between men and women, and relations between two different groups of people.
3. The derivatives of *jahl* other than *jāhiliyya* occur more often in Meccan chapters than in Medinan. At that time, the Muslims did not have total freedom to practise their religion. Thus, *jāhilism* refers to ignorance, rashness, and opposition to the the prophets' commands. However, *jāhiliyya* consistently occurs only in Medinan chapters, referring to a time when the Muslims had total religious freedom. In all its occurrences, *jāhiliyya* refers to a practice which is in contrast to Islam. Thus, the *ḥukm* of *jāhiliyya* is a practice, law or approach that is against Islam, and it is not restricted in time or space or to a population. Therefore, in order to emphasise the necessity of implementing God's law, the Qur'ān denies any law or rule which contradicts Islam.

¹⁰¹ Izutsu says: "*jāhili* cannot properly be translated as pre-Islamic because it means much more and it does not mean simply a period preceding the rise of Islam; it is something positive, and positively oppose to Islam." See Izutsu, *God and Man*, 201.

3. The *ḥukm* of *ṭāghūt*

Ṭāghūt is mentioned in the Qur'ān as being in opposition to the *ḥukm* of God. It is derived from *ṭaghaya* which means to exceed the proper bounds.¹⁰² The derivatives of *ṭ-gh-y* in the Qur'ān have several meanings according to the context and causes of the revelation of the verses.¹⁰³ However, they still bear the original meaning of exceeding the proper bounds. Ibn al-Qayyim defines *ṭāghūt* as “whoever exceeds the bounds, whether it is a matter of worship or obedience.” He further classifies *ṭāghūt* into five major types: *Iblīs*; one who is worshipped by others and he is pleased with it; one who calls others to worship him; one who claims that he has knowledge of metaphysics; and one who does not judge according to the *ḥukm* of God.¹⁰⁴ This classification shows that *ṭāghūt* means giving loyalty to others than God.

The original meaning of *ṭ-gh-y* in the Qur'ān can be seen in Q.96:6 which reads: “Nay! Verily, man does transgress (*la-yatghā*).”

Example No. 1:

Ṭāghūt appears for the first time, using the Qur'ānic order, in Q.2:256, which reads:

There is no compulsion in religion. Verily the right path has become distinct from the wrong path. Whoever disbelieves in *ṭāghūt* and believes in Allah then he has grasped the firm handhold that will never break. And Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knowing.

In this verse, *ṭāghūt* is mentioned as opposition to God whereas disbelief in *ṭāghūt* is parallel to belief in God. The exegetes say that *ṭāghūt* here refers to either Satan, or

¹⁰² *Tahdhīb al-lisān*, 2/95-6; al-Rāghib, *al-Mufradāt*, 304-5.

¹⁰³ Al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 3/19.

¹⁰⁴ Cited from al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 3/26.

sorcerers or soothsayers.¹⁰⁵ However, in their conclusion they say that these are only examples of *ṭāghūt* because each of these exceeds the bounds.¹⁰⁶ Al-Ṭabarī says that the best explanation of *ṭāghūt* here is whoever takes precedence over God in the matter of worship.¹⁰⁷ What can be understood is that *ṭāghūt* here means that the worship of and belief in anything other than God is considered to exceed religious bounds. The Qur'ān, therefore states that true belief is an absolute belief in God without showing loyalty to anyone else. This is implied in the phrase "he has grasped the firm handhold". Following *ṭāghūt*, therefore, includes giving loyalty and obedience to others than God.

Example No. 2:

In connection to the *ḥukm* of God, the word *ṭāghūt* appears in Q.4:60, which reads:

Have you seen those who claim that they believe in that which has been sent down to you and that which was sent down before you, and they wish to go for judgement (*yataḥākamū*) to *ṭāghūt* whereas they have been ordered to reject them. But Satan wishes to lead them far astray.

The verb *yataḥākamū* signifies two parties seeking judgement from another person. The exegetes disagree about whom *ṭāghūt* refers to, owing to the different versions of the occasions of the revelation of this verse. It is said that this verse was revealed as the result of a dispute between a Muslim and a Jew or a hypocrite who refused to seek judgement from the Prophet. Therefore some exegetes say that *ṭāghūt* here refers to Ka'b ibn al-Ashraf or Abū Barza al-Aslamī. These differences, however, do

¹⁰⁵ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 3/19-20; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 1/351; Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 2/292.

¹⁰⁶ Ibn 'Aṭīyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 1/344; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 2/14.

¹⁰⁷ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 3/21.

not prevent a careful analysis of the verse to understand its purpose. The verse criticises those who claim belief in the revelation but in fact refuse the application of *ḥukm* according to the revelation, in which the Qur'ān relates it as the intention of Satan to lead men astray. The occasions of the revelation suggest that whoever does not judge according to the *ḥukm* of God, as given by the Prophet, is considered *ṭāghūt*.¹⁰⁸ The *ḥukm* of *ṭāghūt* here is contrary to the *ḥukm* of God. Therefore the effect of the *ḥukm* of *ṭāghūt* is similar to that of the *ḥukm* of the *Jāhiliyya*: it is not only “the judgement by *ṭāghūt*” but it also indicates “an authority of *ṭāghūt*”.

The command to reject *ḥukm* of *ṭāghūt*, in which the Qur'ān uses the word *kufr*, implies that this verse concerns those who seek *ḥukm* from others instead of God the belief that they can give a true judgement.¹⁰⁹ Such disbelief in the *ḥukm* of God will cause them to be regarded as unbelievers. Al-Rāzī concludes that this verse indicates that whoever refuses the command of God and the Prophet is not a Muslim, whether his refusal is based on suspicion or disobedience.¹¹⁰

The discussion on *ṭāghūt* shows that the *ḥukm* of others than of God is considered to be the *ḥukm* of *ṭāghūt*. It is therefore parallel to the *ḥukm* of the *jāhiliyya*, which is also the *ḥukm* of others than that of God. In this case, Izutsu relates *ṭāghūt* to *jāhiliyya* because *jāhiliyya* is “an incapacity to discern the truth and thus tends to go beyond the bounds.”¹¹¹ He suggests that *ṭughyān* [including *ṭāghūt*]

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 3/66.

¹⁰⁹ Riḍā, *al-Manār*, 5/223.

¹¹⁰ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 5/281.

¹¹¹ Izutsu, *God and Man*, 214.

is often used in describing the attitude of the unbelievers towards God as “a concrete manifestation of *jahl*.”¹¹²

Finally in this section there is the phrase “whoever does not judge (*yaḥkum*) by what Allah has sent down”, which occurs in three verses: Q.5:44,¹¹³ 45 and 47.¹¹⁴ Each indicates that the Book of God contains the laws, that is, the judgement by God, which in turn should be applied. Q.5:45 reads:

And We ordained therein for them: “Life for life, eye for eye, nose for nose, ear for ear, tooth for tooth, and wounds for wounds equal for equal.” But if anyone remits the retaliation by way of charity, it shall be for him an expiation. And whoever does not judge (*yaḥkum*) by what Allah has sent down, such are the *ẓālimūn*.

This phrase states that religious punishment will be meted out to those who fail to apply God’s judgement. The verb *yaḥkum* apparently means “to judge”. However, since these verses occur in the context of the judgement by the Prophet Muḥammad, which implies his authority, the verb has the related meaning of “to rule”.¹¹⁵

To sum up, the root *ḥ-k-m* has two meanings. The first is general and legal judgement, which consists of thinking, resoluteness, decision, legal judgement and regulation. The second is authority, and thus the verb means “to rule”. Judgement is a direct meaning, whereas authority is a related and contextual meaning.

¹¹² Ibid., 214.

¹¹³ For the quotation of this verse, see above, p. 77.

¹¹⁴ For the quotation of this verse, see above, p. 101.

¹¹⁵ These verses will be discussed later, see below pp. 128, 131.

C. Further considerations

Following the analysis of the verses pertaining to judgement by others and its meaning, other aspects of these verses will now be considered.

1. The integrity of judgement by others

The verses can be divided into two different periods of revelation, Meccan and Medinan. Meccan verses as seen above are divided into two categories: the adjudication of the Prophets Dāwūd and Sulaymān, and the judgement by wrongdoers. The former most likely refers to legal judgement and the latter to general judgement. Medinan verses are also divided into two categories: positive adjudication, mostly by the Prophet Muḥammad; and negative adjudication, that is, adherence to the laws other than those of God. In all these divisions, they are related to a common idea of *ḥukm*, that is the *ḥukm* of God, which implies His dominion over mankind and His laws for it.

With these verses the Qur'ān produces a united framework of God's dominion over His servants, using the concept of *ḥukm*. Judgement by the Prophets Dāwūd and Sulaymān is mentioned in two *sūras*, *al-Anbiyā'* and *Ṣād*, whereas judgement by wrongdoers occurs in various *sūras*. The judgement of wrongdoers are more likely related to belief in God, such as belief in His Oneness and His Will, including granting offspring to men. This reminds men to accept and carry out all judgement from God, implying that wrong judgements could thus be avoided. Judgement by the Prophets Dāwūd and Sulaymān emphasise exercising justice between people. The best judgement must be made, as seen in Q.21:79. Thus justice is the basis and the aim of judgement.

The Prophet was informed in the Meccan period of the necessity to conform to God's Decisions, one of which is the exercise of justice. The Prophet seemed to know from the story of the Prophets Dāwūd and Sulaymān that the only way to exercise justice was by acquiring authority. Therefore, during the Meccan period God did not reveal to the Prophet a particular verse about the legal judgement of two disputing parties. After the Prophet moved to Medina, then the verses on legal judgement were gradually revealed to him.

Medinan verses continue to emphasise God's dominion but from a wider perspective. The verses are divided into two types, displaying two different responses to the *ḥukm* of God. Individual verses, that is, Q.2:188,¹¹⁶ Q.4:35¹¹⁷ and Q.5:95,¹¹⁸ refer to the legal systems and the importance of exercising justice in human society: the obligation on judges not to accept any doubtful gift; the appointment of two *ḥakams* to deal with marital discord; and the passing of judgement by two just men. Verses in *Sūras al-Nisā'*, *al-Mā'ida* and *al-Nūr* revealed after the Prophet's *hijra* from Mecca to Medina highlight in greater detail the Prophet's position in Medina regarding adjudication and the exercising of justice. His authority to pass judgement was derived from his role as a leader with political power, a role that he held throughout his time in Medina. Political authority was evidently important for effective adjudication.

The Medinan verses stress the idea of God's dominion over humankind. Q.4:58¹¹⁹ and Q.4:59¹²⁰ classify people into two groups; the rulers and the ruled. The

¹¹⁶ See above, p. 85.

¹¹⁷ See above, p. 99.

¹¹⁸ See above, p. 99.

¹¹⁹ See above, p. 86.

rulers here include also the judges and religious scholars. The rulers are ordered to fulfil their trust by applying justice not only when passing judgement, but also in the government of society as exemplified by the Prophet's leadership. So, justice is the Qur'ānic agenda for human society, and it is indeed very important when trusts have not been established. The absence of trusts in society can lead to the absence of justice. When the Prophet returned the key to the Ka'ba to 'Uthmān, he was fulfilling a trust and at the same time establishing justice. If he had not returned it, he would have failed in his duty.

Q.4:59 refers to the obligation on the part of the ruled, who are ordered to obey God, the Prophet and the rulers [including those who are in charge of their affairs]. Obedience to God can be understood as following His Book, which for the Muslims is the Qur'ān. Obedience to the Prophet within his lifetime and after his death is shown by the acceptance of his *sunna*.¹²¹ Obedience to the rulers means obedience to the believing rulers, which is understood from the phrase "those who are in charge among you."¹²²

All these commands are directed to the believers: "O you who believe!" This implies that the believers are those who are capable of carrying them out. Indeed, the verse displays a relationship between the concept of belief and the structure of society. As believers, they are required to obey God and His Messenger. Since the rulers and the ruled are the elements of society, the latter must obey the former. Both

¹²⁰ See above, p. 96.

¹²¹ This verse was one of the examples that the scholars derived the validity of the Qur'ān and the *sunna* as the sources of Islamic Law. See, for example, al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 5/270.

¹²² The phrase in Q.5:49, "those who are in charge among you" can imply that the rulers should be believers. This is different from the grounds on which the jurists have based the requirement that the judge [including the ruler] should be Muslim. See al-Mawardī, *al-Aḥkām al-sulṭāniyya*, 1/174; al-Nabhān, *Niẓām al-ḥukm*, 571.

of them without doubt are required to go to God and His Messenger for judgement, especially when disputes arise between them. This implies that judgement must not be purely the result of people's deliberation but something to be exercised according to God's laws.¹²³

After describing these important divisions within society and the need for justice, Q.4:60¹²⁴ then exposes the negative attitude of a group of people who fail to act as true believers. According to Q.4:59 believers must follow God and His Messenger, but Q.4:60 demonstrates that there are some people who do not want to follow this system and are therefore distinct from the believers. Such people are described as seeking the *ḥukm* of *ṭāghūt*. If they are truly to believe in what God has sent down, which includes His *ḥukm*, they should adhere to it and not indulge in following others, which is termed *ṭāghūt* in the verse. This verse raises the question of true belief in God and His revelation, and compares belief in Him with belief in *ṭāghūt*. Belief in God requires people to accept the *ḥukm* of God which indicates acknowledgement of His dominion.

After referring to the negative aspect of what believers should avoid, the Qur'ān continues with the positive aspect [Q.4:65].¹²⁵ The verses between Q.4:60 and Q.4:65 reveal the real attitude of those in Q.4:60, showing them to be hypocrites. Unlike the hypocrites, believers, should seek judgement from the Prophet because he, as stated in Q.4:64, was sent to be obeyed by them: "We sent no Messenger, but to be obeyed by Allah's leave". This obedience means submission and therefore, as

¹²³ Quṭb, *Zilāl*, 2/690.

¹²⁴ See above, p.117.

¹²⁵ See above, p. 87-8.

Sayyid Quṭb suggests, implies authority of the Prophet over the people where the latter must follow the former.¹²⁶

Obedience to the Prophet implies obedience to God. The Prophet lived with the people and he received revelation from God: he was regarded as the wisest among them, and he had a greater knowledge than them about God. He acted on behalf of God, exemplifying His exact *ḥukm*. Therefore, the *ḥukm* of God, as symbolised in the *ḥukm* of the Prophet, is the opposite of the *ḥukm* of *ṭāghūt*.

The verse also relates the acceptance of the *ḥukm* of the Prophet to belief (*īmān*). Refusal to follow the *ḥukm* of the Prophet contributes to the denial of belief, and so the verse reveals another responsibility for the ruled. Evidently the Muslims have no alternative other than giving full adherence to the Prophet.¹²⁷ Al-Qurṭubī draws the following conclusion: anyone who does not adhere to the Prophet's judgement and rejects it, is considered as apostate. According to him, this also applies after the Prophet's time to those who do not respect a judge's ruling and must therefore be called to repent. However, if they only question the judge, the latter has a right to punish or to forgive them.¹²⁸ The implication of the verse is that seeking judgement from the Prophet does not end with his death, but effectively continues with the application of the *sharīʿa* that he has bequeathed. According to al-Alūsī, seeking judgement from the Prophet's *sharīʿa* is a manifestation of seeking his judgement. He quotes Abū Bakr saying:¹²⁹

¹²⁶ Quṭb, *Ẓilāl*, 2/696.

¹²⁷ See Ḥasanayn, *Riqābat al-umma*, 132-133.

¹²⁸ Al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ*, 5/172-173; cf. Ibn al-ʿArabī, *Aḥkām al-Qurʾān*, 1/578.

¹²⁹ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 3/69; cf. al-Shawkānī, *Fath al-qadīr*, 1/574.

If people worshipped Allah, performed the *ṣalāt*, paid the *zakāt*, fasted, went on the pilgrimage and then said to what the Prophet did: "can anyone do differently from what the Prophet did", or they found resistance in themselves, they are the polytheists (*mushrikīn*). He then recited the verse.

The *ḥukm* of God, implied in Q.4:60, becomes a basis for the *ḥukm* of the Prophet, which is indicated in Q.4:105.¹³⁰ This suggests a relationship between justice [Q.4:58] and the *ḥukm* of God, the latter being the basis of judgement [Q.4:105]. Therefore, the Prophet was ordered to judge according to what God had revealed.

Q.4:60 above establishes that justice cannot be implemented if the *ḥukm* of *tāghūt* is followed, for the *ḥukm* of God is an essential basis.¹³¹ The main source of the *ḥukm* of God, is the Qur'ān, which means that the Qur'ān is a tool for implementing justice.

Though Q.4:105, from the occasion of the revelation, shows that judgement by the Prophet is his own independent legal reasoning (*ijtihād*), the phrase *bi-mā arāka llāh*, which is related to the revelation, implies that his judgement is made according to the Qur'ān. In other words, though the particular judgement is not clearly stated in the Qur'ān, the Prophet's ruling seems to be based on its principles. If this assumption is true, judgement by the Qur'ān has two implications: the first is clear judgement as stated in the text; and the second is indirect judgement deduced from the Qur'ān principles.¹³²

The verse stresses three elements: the first is the authority of God in sending down the revelation, which shows that the Qur'ān and consequently the religion are

¹³⁰ See above, p. 89.

¹³¹ Cf. Quṭb, *Ẓilāl*, 2/751.

¹³² Al-Shāfi'ī, *al-Risāla*, 83.

from God and are not the work of the Prophet. The second is that the function of the Qur'ān is for the Prophet to use it as a basis or reference for his judgement. This indicates that the authority of the Prophet is overshadowed by the authority of God, which no one can supersede. Since justice is related to the *ḥukm* of God, it implies a relationship between belief in God and justice. This means that belief in God should lead people to exercise justice.¹³³ The third is not to be a pleader for or defender of the treacherous party. These three elements act as a basis for judgement.

The phrase *bi-mā arāka llāh* implies that God's laws, which are in the revelation, are provided for people to study before passing judgement. When the Prophet acted as a judge, he was in fact implementing God's laws as laid down in the Qur'ān. Therefore, the Prophet did not possess absolute freedom in making judgement, rather, he was bound by God's judgement. Though Q.4:58 and Q.4:65 mention the responsibility and the right of the Prophet to judge, Q.4:105 imposes a limit on his authority.

Q.4:105 shows a relationship between knowledge and judgement. This is understood from the idea that judgement should be made on the basis of knowledge of the Book of God. The phrase *bi-mā arāka llāh* implies an absolute confidence in the revelation, acquired by knowledge of it.¹³⁴ The verse not only highlights the importance of judgement, but also, by using this phrase, emphasises the need for accuracy in judgement. Therefore a person must be knowledgeable in order to qualify as a judge.¹³⁵

¹³³ Cf. Quṭb, *Zilāl*, 2/752.

¹³⁴ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 5/432-433.

¹³⁵ Muslim jurists view that knowledge is one of the requirements of a judge. See Ibn Abī al-Dam, *Adab al-qaḍā*, 56; Ibn Farḥūn, *Tabṣīrat al-ḥukkām*, 1/21.

In *Sūrat al-Mā'ida*, the idea of justice and implementing the *ḥukm* of God is elaborated further but in a negative way. Q.5:41 reveals the attitude of the Jews who did not want to implement the *ḥukm* of God in the Torah, which was a denial of justice.¹³⁶ Therefore, in Q.5:42,¹³⁷ the Prophet was told to judge with justice if he so chose.

Q.5:43,¹³⁸ besides restating the importance of belief in God by describing as faithless those who reject His *ḥukm*, again shows that justice is possible when based on the *ḥukm* of God. As an example of the lack of faith the Qur'ān uses the case of the Jews. According to the exegetes the phrase "for they are not believers" has two important meanings:

1. Their lack of faith in God, which is akin to disbelief (*kufr*).¹³⁹
2. Their lack of faith in the Prophet and the Torah.¹⁴⁰

This verse, besides illustrating another responsibility of the ruled, shows that the Jews refused to accept not only a prescribed law of God in the Torah, but also the judgement provided by the Prophet, thereby rejecting an order which came from the revelation. The implication is that they did not have faith in God, as shown by the phrase "for they are not believers". The phrase "then they turn away", which occurs after they came to seek judgement from the Prophet, shows that they were not

¹³⁶ Denial of justice here refers to the Jews' inconsistency in applying the *ḥukm* of God, and can refer to the denial of the right of the application of the *ḥukm* of God. See also the occasion of the revelation of this verse on p. 90.

¹³⁷ See above, p. 90.

¹³⁸ See above, p. 91.

¹³⁹ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 4/580; Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 3/501; Abū al-Su'ūd, *Irshād*, 2/44; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 3/310; cf. Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1/623.

¹⁴⁰ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 6/29; Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 3/502; Abū al-Su'ūd, *Irshād*, 2/44; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 3/310; cf. Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1/623.

sincere in their action but rather aimed to deceive the Prophet, yet another attribute casting doubt on their faith. According to this verse, the lack of faith and disbelief is due to two causes: rejecting the *ḥukm* of God, and deceiving the *ḥukm* of God. Following this verse, the Qurʾān describes the faithless rejecters of the implementation of the *ḥukm* of God and belief in Him: “whoever does not judge according to what Allah has sent down are the *kāfirūn*, *ẓālimūn* and *fāsiqūn*.” These classifications are dealt with in Q.5:44, 45 and 47.

In these three verses, men are ordered to pass judgement according to what God has revealed, and the Qurʾān condemns those who are unwilling to implement the Qurʾānic law. The *kāfirūn* are considered the worst of the three classifications. These three verses are closely connected to Q.5:43. This verse condemns the Jews who reject the *ḥukm* of God as revealed in the Torah: such action is described as lack of belief.

Q.5:44¹⁴¹ should be compared with Q.4:65, which implies the necessity to obey the *sharīʿa*, and thereby submit fully to judgement by the Prophet. Ibn Taymiyya is reported to have said in his *Minhāj al-Sunna*:

Whoever does not believe in the necessity of judging according to what God has revealed to the Prophet is an unbeliever, and whoever does not judge according to what God has revealed, even though it looks just, is also an unbeliever.¹⁴²

This demonstrates that belief and practice are two interrelated elements and a true believer is one who practises religious law,¹⁴³ this being the manifestation of belief in

¹⁴¹ See above, p. 77.

¹⁴² Cited from Khalil, *Nizām al-ḥukm*, 67.

¹⁴³ See Ḥasanayn, *Riqābat al-umma*, 152-153.

God.¹⁴⁴ The obligation to implement the *ḥukm* of God is imposed on not only the rulers but also the ruled. The necessity of implementing the *ḥukm* of God is not confined to the Muslims, according to the Qur'ān; it is a way defined for all the followers of the prophets. Thus, the Qur'ān uses the term *shirʿa* as the only way that He has made for humankind. [Q.5:48]¹⁴⁵

To ensure that the believers follow the *ḥukm* of God, Q.5:49¹⁴⁶ reminds them not to give way to desires. This is another responsibility for rulers as well as judges. Desires are not only the opposite of the *ḥukm* of God but are a serious obstacle to it. The choice is, as Sayyid Quṭb says: "either following what Allah has sent down or following the desires and temptations against which Allah has warned."¹⁴⁷ Therefore, since the *ḥukm* of God is free from men's desires and it comes from God, men's desires should be aimed in this direction. The warning "not to follow desires" is also given in Q.45:18, which commands men to follow the *sharīʿa*.¹⁴⁸ As the *ḥukm* and the *sharīʿa* are interrelated, the obstacle to their implementation, in the Qur'ānic view, is the same, that is desires.

In conclusion of the *ḥukm*-verses in *Sūrat al-Mā'ida*, the Qur'ān proclaims the perfection of the *ḥukm* of God by highlighting the question of which *ḥukm* is better: that of God or that of others? [Q.5:50]¹⁴⁹ The latter is identified as the *ḥukm* of the *Jāhiliyya*. Thus, the *ḥukm* of the *Jāhiliyya* together with the *ḥukm* of *ṭāghūt*, men's

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 156-157.

¹⁴⁵ See above, p. 91.

¹⁴⁶ See above, p. 92.

¹⁴⁷ Quṭb, *Ẓilāl*, 2/904.

¹⁴⁸ See above, p. 58.

¹⁴⁹ See above, p. 104.

desires and the refusal to implement the *ḥukm* of God stand in opposition to belief in God, which requires men to exercise justice. In response to this, the verses in *sūrat al-Nūr* show two different human attitudes: one refusing and the other accepting the *ḥukm* of God as symbolised by the *ḥukm* of the Prophet. Q.24:48¹⁵⁰ should be compared with Q.4:65. The former reproaches those who refuse to seek judgement from the Prophet, and the latter declares that failure to seek judgement from the Prophet can brand one as an unbeliever. Therefore Q.24:51¹⁵¹ provides a line of action for the Muslims to follow. Besides, these three verses reform the Arab practice of *taḥkīm* in two ways: the necessity to seek judgement from a judge without any hesitation; and the necessity to accept judgement without any argument.¹⁵²

This discussion has shown that the fundamental issue of the *ḥukm* of God is the acknowledgement of God's authority, which is a part of the belief in Him. This means that Islam does not recognise authority to belong to any group of people or individual but only to God.¹⁵³ This authority is indeed proclaimed earlier in Q.5:40, and following the *ḥukm*-verses in *Sūrat al-Mā'ida* above, Q.5:51 describes those who should not be obeyed: Q.5:40 asserts God's oneness, authority and power:¹⁵⁴

Know you not that to Allah [alone] belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth! He punishes whom He wills and He forgives whom He wills. And Allah is Able to do all things.

¹⁵⁰ See above, p. 92.

¹⁵¹ See above, p. 92.

¹⁵² See Munīr al-ʿAjlānī, *ʿAbqariyyat al-Islām*, 46. In the pre-Islamic era of *taḥkīm*, a *ḥakam* did not have the authority to impose a verdict, and so the litigants could ignore it.

¹⁵³ Ḥasanayn, *Riqābat al-umma*, 48-9.

¹⁵⁴ Quṭb, *Zilāl*, 2/889.

Q.5:51 reads:

O you who believe! Take not the Jews and the Christians as protectors, they are but helpers to each other. And if any amongst you takes them [as protectors], then surely he is one of them. Verily Allah guides not those people who are the wrong-doers.

Belief in the sovereignty of God means belief in His authority which His laws are the only convenient and appropriate guidance to be adopted.¹⁵⁵ Therefore, only God has the right of legislation, and the power and authority that people enjoy as rulers and judges are not absolute but subject to religious laws.¹⁵⁶ This is highlighted by Sayyid Quṭb who says: “there is neither a means of turning away from it [*ḥukm* of God] and seeking another judgement nor is there a law other than His [God’s] law.”¹⁵⁷ Q.5:41 shows that people must accept the judgement by God which refers to His regulations and therefore, to insist on this obligation, Q.5:40 begins with God’s authority. On the other hand this discussion shows that human authority is important in making others follow the *ḥukm* of God.

2. Qur’ānic considerations of the application of the *ḥukm* of God

As mentioned above, there are some verses that give special consideration to the application of the *ḥukm* of God. Here it is referred to as His legal judgement, which is termed the *sharīʿa*. Those lacking belief (*īmān*) because they refuse to seek judgement by the Prophet, including judgement by God, are referred to in Q.4:65 and Q.5:43:¹⁵⁸ and those who are unwilling to judge according to the *ḥukm* of God are

¹⁵⁵ See al-Nabhān, *Nizām al-ḥukm*, 123.

¹⁵⁶ See Ḥasanayn, *Riqābat al-umma*, 206-207.

¹⁵⁷ Quṭb, *Zilāl*, 2/902.

¹⁵⁸ The implication of these two verses have been mentioned. See above, pp.123, 124, 127.

referred to in Q.5:44, Q.5:45 and Q.5:47. The latter may be understood to include those who do not rule according to the *ḥukm* of God.

The Qurʾān apparently views the seeking of judgement from the *ḥukm* of God from two angles: belief and disbelief. It uses three religious terms to describe those who refuse to implement the *ḥukm* of God, namely *kāfirūn*, *ẓālimūn* and *fāsiqūn*. Therefore, those who do implement the *ḥukm* of God are regarded as believers. The question is, do the *kāfirūn*, *ẓālimūn* and *fāsiqūn* constitute only one aspect of disbelief which is in contrast to belief, or do they indicate three different categories which are not the opposite of belief? It is important, therefore, to discuss the differences between the terms *kufr*, *ẓulm* and *fisq*.¹⁵⁹

a. *Kufr*

The common translation for the word *kufr* is disbelief. Its root is *k-f-r*, and the basic meaning is “covering something”. Technically, it is used as the antithesis of both belief and thankfulness.¹⁶⁰ Thus, the verb *kafara* means to disbelieve and to refuse to proclaim thankfulness. The corresponding verbal noun is *kufr*, and, according to al-Rāghib, *kufrān*, another verbal noun, is used to mean ingratitude, whereas *kufr* is used to mean disbelief.¹⁶¹ This idea is supported by al-Kirmānī,¹⁶² quoted by Izutsu, who states that the verb *kafara* has two different verbal nouns, *kufr* and *kufrān*, and that the former is the opposite of belief while the latter is the opposite of

¹⁵⁹ Izutsu has dealt with these terms at length. See Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts*, 119-39, 159-62, 164-72.

¹⁶⁰ *Tahdhib al-Lisān*, 2/466; al-Rāghib, *al-Mufradāt*, 35; Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts*, 119.

¹⁶¹ Al-Rāghib, *al-Mufradāt*, 35.

¹⁶² Al-Kirmānī is a commentator on *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*.

thankfulness.¹⁶³ Izutsu argues that *kufṛ* is actually used very frequently as the exact antonym of belief (*īmān*).¹⁶⁴

K-f-r is one of the roots which, in its various forms, occurs frequently in the Qur'ān. Some of the relevant verses will be analysed to explore its meaning.

Example No. 1:

Verily those who disbelieve (*kafarū*), it is the same to them whether you warn them or do not warn them, they will not believe. (Q.2:6)

The verse occurs in the Qur'ān after verses which focus on the attitude of the believers. The verb *kafarū* differentiates the unbelievers from the believers. Thus *kufṛ* here means “disbelief”, the antonym of belief.¹⁶⁵

Example No.2:

How shall Allah guide a people who disbelieved (*kafarū*) after their belief (*īmān*) and after they bore witness that the Messenger is true and after clear proofs had come unto them? And Allah does not guide the people who are wrong doers. (Q.3:86)

In this verse the verb *kafarū* contrasts with the word *īmān*. The latter denotes belief and so the former should denote disbelief. The verse serves, as Izutsu suggests, “to bring to light the basic semantic opposition of *kufṛ* and *īmān*, that is, *kufṛ* as opposed not to the concept of thankfulness, but to that of belief because the antithesis here is emphasised quite explicitly.”¹⁶⁶

¹⁶³ Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts*, 124.

¹⁶⁴ Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts*, 119.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 1/143; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-ta'wīl*, 1/42.

¹⁶⁶ Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts*, 126.

Example No. 3:

And [remember] when We said to the angels: “Prostrate yourselves before Ādam.” And they prostrated themselves except Iblīs: he refused and was haughty and was one of the unbelievers (*kāfirīn*). (Q.2:34)

Kufr here is the opposite of belief because Iblīs totally rejected God’s command to prostrate himself to Ādam. The rejection here implies disbelief in God’s command and therefore disbelief in Him. The verse shows that haughtiness and the rejection of the commandments of God are elements of disbelief. *Kufr* here consists of the refusal to accept the doctrine on the grounds that it is completely absurd. Since it has very little to do with gratitude or ingratitude, the issue hinges on the acceptability or unacceptability of such a doctrine to reason.¹⁶⁷

Example No. 4:

And Allah put forward the example of a township that dwelt secure and well content: its provision coming to it in abundance from every place, but it [its people] denied (*fa-kafarat*) the favours of Allah. So Allah made it taste extreme hunger [famine] and fear, because of that evil which they [its people] used to do. (Q.16:112)

The verb *kafara* indicates the lack of appreciation of God’s blessing or favours, yielding another meaning of *kufr*, that is, “ingratitude”. Thus, *kufr* is used expressly in anthithesis to *shukr* (thankfulness).¹⁶⁸

Example No. 5:

And you [Mūsā] did the deed which you did while you were one of those who are ungrateful (*kāfirīn*). (Q.26:17)

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 125.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 121.

The word *kāfirīn* reminds the Prophet Mūsā that he was brought up in Pharaoh's palace. The Prophet Mūsā eventually opposes Pharaoh, prompting him to consider the Prophet Mūsā to be ungrateful. *Kufr* here means "ingratitude".

Example No. 6:

And Shayṭān will say when the matter has been decided: "Verily Allah promised you a promise of truth. And I too promised you but I betrayed you. I had no authority over you except that I called you, and you responded to me. So do not blame me, but blame yourselves. I cannot help you nor can you help me. I deny (*kafartu*) your former action in associating me as a partner with Allah. Verily, there is a painful torment for the wrongdoers. (Q.14:22)

Even though the verb *kafara* in this verse uses the basic meaning of "to conceal" and so "to deny", the context suggests another meaning. Satan excuses himself to his followers in the world by claiming that he is already a *kāfir*, since he disobeyed God's order to bow to Ādam. Thus the verb *kafartu* in this verse implies "I free myself", that is, "I am not responsible".¹⁶⁹

It can be concluded from this discussion that the root *k-f-r* in the Qur'ān has the two main meanings of disbelief, or ingratitude, with the less important meaning of lack of responsibility (*barā'a*). The first two meanings occur more frequently than the third.

b. *Ẓulm*

Ẓulm is the corresponding verbal noun from the verb *ẓalama*, and its usual translation is wrong, evil, injustice and tyranny.¹⁷⁰ The basic meaning of the root *ẓ-l-m* is

¹⁶⁹ Al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 1/517; al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 13/238.

¹⁷⁰ Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts*, 165.

“putting in the wrong place” and “exceeding the limit”.¹⁷¹ Thus *ẓulm* is an antonym of *ʿadl* because an *ʿādil* means someone who knows how to put something in its place. Therefore, an *ʿādil* is one who avoids *ẓulm*.

In the Qurʾān, *ẓulm* generally means “exceeding the limit” and is associated with putting something in the wrong place. The following verses are useful illustrations of this meaning.

Example No. 1:

And We said: “O Ādam! Dwell you and your wife in paradise, and eat both of you freely with pleasure and delight, of things therein as wherever you will, but come not near this tree or you will both be of the wrongdoers (*ẓālimīn*). (Q.2:35)

In this verse, God has ordered Ādam and his wife not to go near the tree, because their disobedience will make both of them of the *ẓālimīn*. A *ẓālim* is one who disobeys God’s order, exceeds the limit stipulated for him by God, and therefore is shown to have committed a transgression. He is therefore a wrong-doer. If Ādam does what is prohibited he will be considered as to have gone beyond what is permissible for him in Paradise. The meaning of *ẓālim* as wrongdoer is related to “putting in the wrong place”, because doing what is prohibited is considered to be acting in the wrong way.¹⁷²

Example No. 2:

And do not turn away those who invoke their Lord, morning and afternoon seeking His face. You are accountable for them in nothing, and

¹⁷¹ *Tahdhīb al-lisān*, 2/120; *al-Rāghib, al-Mufradāt*, 315.

¹⁷² Some exegetes give the meaning of *ẓulm* as putting in the wrong place. See *al-Ṭabarī, Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 1/272; *Ibn ʿAṭīyya, al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 1/128; *al-Khāzin, Lubāb al-tawīl*, 1/65.

they are accountable for you in nothing that [if you] turn them away, and thus become of the wrongdoers (*ẓālimūn*). (Q.6:52)

This verse tells us that Muslims will be wrongdoers if they reject their poor brothers and sisters for the sole reason that they are poor, because poverty does not in any way constitute a sound reason. *Ẓulm* as transgression refers to any kind of human action that goes beyond the proper limit and encroaches on the rights of others. Hence, to practice an act of *ẓulm* is to hurt someone seriously for no conceivable reason.¹⁷³

Another important aspect of *ẓulm* is its use to refer to the unbeliever (*kāfir*). This leads some scholars, such as Izutsu and Muḥammad Rashid Riḍā, to assume that *ẓulm* is equivalent to *kufr* in the Qurʾān.¹⁷⁴ This assumption, however, appears to be incorrect. Analysis has shown that *ẓulm* is used to refer to *kufr*. However, although *kufr* always implies *ẓulm*, the reverse is not necessarily true. As al-Bayḍāwī suggests, *ẓulm* is more general and more comprehensive in meaning than *kufr*.¹⁷⁵ Al-Ṭabarī quotes ‘Aṭā’ ibn Dīnār as saying: “Praise be to Allah who said: ‘The unbelievers (*kāfirūn*) are the wrongdoers (*ẓālimūn*), and did not say the wrongdoers (*ẓālimūn*) are the unbelievers (*kāfirūn*).’”¹⁷⁶ The following examples demonstrate this idea.

Example No. 3:

Say: “O my people! Work according to your way, surely, I too am working [in my way], and you will come to know for which of us will be the end in the Hereafter. Certainly the wrongdoers (*ẓālimūn*) will not be successful.” (Q.6:135)

¹⁷³ Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts*, 168.

¹⁷⁴ See Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts*, 169; Riḍā, *al-Manār*, 3/20.

¹⁷⁵ Al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 1/322.

¹⁷⁶ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, 6/6.

Al-Bayḍāwī says that the phrase “work according to your way” refers to remaining in disbelief (*kufr*) and enmity (*ʿadāwa*).¹⁷⁷ In this verse, the Prophet addresses his words to the unbelievers, called specifically “the wrongdoers”. This demonstrates that the unbelievers are the wrong-doers and not vice versa. The unbelievers refuse to follow the Prophet and are therefore following the wrong path. They are to be regarded as wrongdoers.

Example No. 4:

O you who believe! Spend of that which We have provided for you, before a day comes when there will be neither bargaining, nor friendship, nor intercession. And it is the unbelievers (*kāfirūn*) who are the wrongdoers (*ẓālimūn*). (Q.2:254)

The unbelievers here refer to those who refuse to spend some of their wealth to help others. In al-Bayḍāwī’s view, the verse was revealed to emphasise the importance of this obligation.¹⁷⁸ *Ẓālimūn* is used to show that the unbelievers’ behaviour is wrong.

c. *Fisq*

The root *f-s-q* means “deviation from the right way”, and its verbal noun is *fisq*. In a religious context, it denotes deviation from what is required and is interpreted as disobedience.¹⁷⁹ *Fāsiq* is always defined as “disobedient”. According to this meaning, anyone who indulges in a prohibited activity is considered to be *fāsiq*.

¹⁷⁷ Al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 1/322.

¹⁷⁸ Al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 1/322; cf. Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 6/6.

¹⁷⁹ *Tahdhīb al-lisān*, 2/317; al-Rāghib, *al-Mufradāt*, 380.

However al-Rāghib says that *fisq* is the committing of many transgressions and is used of someone who recognises the religious law but disobeys it.¹⁸⁰

Fisq and its derivatives in the Qurʾān maintains the original meaning of the root *f-s-q*.

Examples Nos. 1 and 2:

Verily Allah is not ashamed to set forth a parable even of a mosquito or so much more when it is bigger than it. And as for those who believe, they know that it is the truth from their Lord, but as for those who disbelieve, they say: "What did Allah intend by this parable?" By it He misleads many, and many He guides thereby. And He misleads thereby only those who are the disobedient (*fāsiqīn*). Those who break Allah's covenant after ratifying it, and sever what Allah has ordered to be joined and do mischief on earth, it is they who are the losers. (Q.2:26-27)

Is then he who is a believer like him who is disobedient (*fāsiq*)? Not equal are they". (Q32:18)

Regarding the first verse al-Ṭabarī says that *fisq* basically means "going away from something", and, according to al-Rāzī, *fāsiq* is "one who deviates from obedience".¹⁸¹ The verses describe the attitudes or the deeds of the *fāsiqīn* who indulge in that which God has prohibited. Therefore, a *fāsiq* means "a disobedient person" and "one who deviates from the right way".

The second verse compares the believer and the disobedient person. At first glance this comparison suggests that *fisq* is the opposite of *īmān*. This is not a valid assumption because its preceding verses deal with believers and unbelievers and this verse continues on the same basis. *Fāsiq* describes the quality of the unbeliever, that is, an unbeliever is a *fāsiq*. It does not necessarily demonstrate that a *fāsiq* is an unbeliever.

¹⁸⁰ Al-Rāghib, *al-Mufradāt*, 380.

¹⁸¹ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 1/218; al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 1/556.

It can be concluded from this discussion that *kufr* is the highest degree of disobedience and is followed by *ẓulm* and *fisq*. Furthermore, a *kāfir* is a *ẓālim* and a *fāsiq* but a *ẓālim* and a *fāsiq* are not necessarily a *kāfir*. *Fāsiq* can be considered a term of wider application than *kāfir* because the former refers to someone who deviates from obedience to God whereas the latter denies belief in God and revelation.¹⁸² As for *ẓālim*, it refers to someone who goes beyond the limits permitted by religion and intrudes on the right of others. ^{١٣٧}

From the analysis of *kufr*, *ẓulm* and *fisq*, the classification of those who refuse to implement the *ḥukm* of God into *kāfirūn*, *ẓālimūn* and *fāsiqūn* should signify differences between them. As regard to this, Q.5:44 has received special attention from the exegetes in their writing because it clearly specifies as unbelievers those who refuse to accept the law of God. This is considered to have the worst possible implications for them. However, in the context of this verse, the exegetes have not reached any agreement about the meaning conveyed by the phrase “the unbelievers”. Their opinions are as follows:

1. Disbelief, which contradicts faith.
2. Ingratitude for the favours of God (*kufr niʿma*).
3. Concealing the truth of that which should be revealed.

The first opinion is held by many exegetes. The second is attributed to Ibn ʿAbbās, and the third is one of the opinions of al-Ṭabarī. Ibn ʿAbbās is reported to use the phrase “disbelief which is below a level of disbelief” (*kufr dūna kufr*), which means *kufr niʿma*. This type of *kufr* does not cause someone to be a true unbeliever, but only a sinner. However, this opinion is rejected by al-Rāzī, who says that once the

¹⁸² Cf. Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious*, 126.

term *kufṛ* is mentioned, it refers to disbelief, which is the opposite of belief.¹⁸³ Nonetheless, there is another report from Ibn ʿAbbās, who says that *kufṛ* here is a “true disbelief” which is applicable to those who deny the obligation of applying the law of God.¹⁸⁴ As for al-Ṭabarī, he bases this definition on the literal meaning of *kufṛ*, which is concealment. However, in his conclusion of this verse, he says that *kufṛ* here is the opposite of *imān*, and is applicable to those who refuse to apply the law of God.¹⁸⁵ Therefore, the majority seems to relate *kufṛ* here to disbelief, the latter being the opposite of belief (*īmān*).

Regarding the opinion which holds that *kufṛ* here is the opposite of *imān*, disagreements have arisen over the identity of the addressees of this verse, as follows:

1. The Jews only.¹⁸⁶
2. *Kāfirūn* is applied to the Muslims, *zālimūn* to the Jews and *fāsiqūn* to the Christians. This opinion is held by al-Shaʿbī, and, according to al-Alūsī, it shows that the Muslims’ rejection of the law of God is worse than that of the Jews and the Christians.¹⁸⁷
3. The unbelievers only, and excluding the Muslims.¹⁸⁸
4. Anyone in general who does not apply the law of God.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸³ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 6/34.

¹⁸⁴ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 4/597.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 4/597.

¹⁸⁶ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 4/592; Ibn ʿAṭīyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 2/196; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-taʾwīl*, 2/276.

¹⁸⁷ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 3/314.

¹⁸⁸ See al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ*, 6/124; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-taʾwīl*, 2/276.

On examination, this verse can be seen as a response to the attitude of the Jews who refused to accept the law of God. Therefore, the occasion of revelation shows that it is addressed to Jews. However, is it addressed exclusively to them or more generally to anyone who behaves as they do? The word “whoever” is a general form which, in this verse, is used to refer to anyone who does not apply the law of God. Even though the cause of revelation is exclusive to the Jews, the Qur’ān concludes by generalising its application with the use of the word “whoever” (*man*). Therefore, the application of this verse is clearly general and not confined to the Jews.¹⁹⁰ This is an example of the scholars’ maxim: “the point is in the general wording and not in the specific cause.”¹⁹¹ It can be argued that if this verse does not include the Muslims, what is the significance of addressing this verse only to a specific group and excluding others who have a similar attitude? In my opinion the Muslims who behave in the same way should be included in this verse, particularly as they are the people who must comply with the Qur’ānic revelation. Therefore, this verse includes anyone who refuses to accept the law of God.

Q.5:44, 45 and 47 end with three different categories, which are apparently applied to three different groups of people according to how each group rejects the law of God. It can therefore be assumed that the titles of *ẓālimūn* and *fāsiqūn*, but not that of *kāfirūn* are generally applicable to everyone who refuses to implement the law of God. This means that the unbelievers in this case are also wrongdoers (*ẓālimūn*) and disobedient (*fāsiqūn*), although wrongdoers and disobedients are not

¹⁸⁹ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 4/596-7; Ibn ʿAṭiyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 2/196.

¹⁹⁰ Cf. Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 6/34.

¹⁹¹ *Al-ʿtibār bi-ʿumūm al-laḥẓ lā bi-khuṣūṣ al-sabab*. See al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 6/34.

necessarily unbelievers. According to al-Biqā'ī, these three verses imply that whoever accepts the law of God is a Muslim and is exempt from these three categories.¹⁹²

The exegetes generally say that the title of *kāfirūn* is applied to those who refuse to apply the law of God, and abandon it intentionally and deny its obligation. This opinion is shared by Ibn Mas'ūd, Ibn 'Abbās, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, al-Suddī, al-Ṭabarī, 'Ikrima and Abū al-Su'ūd.¹⁹³ Al-Rāzī claims that this is the best answer to the question.¹⁹⁴ This opinion is akin to the discussion above on *kufr* where the term is applied in its sense of disbelief to those who disbelieve in God or refuse to accept the necessity of the doctrine stipulated by God.¹⁹⁵ Al-Zamakhsharī adds another attribute, that of distorting the law of God.¹⁹⁶ He quotes Ḥudhayfa as saying:¹⁹⁷

You are more likely to behave as the children of Isrā'īl do, you will follow their way in a completely identical manner, exactly identical, except that I do not know whether you worship the idol or not.¹⁹⁸

As for *ẓālimūn* and *fāsiqūn*, the exegetes seem to apply both of them to those who refuse to accept the law of God but believe in its obligation. *Ẓālimūn* are those who apply the wrong regulation and *fāsiqūn* are those who deviate from the right

¹⁹² Al-Biqā'ī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 2/460.

¹⁹³ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 4/597; Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 3/503; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-ta'wīl*, 2/276; al-Biqā'ī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 2/460; cf. al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 6/211; Ibn 'Aṭīyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 2/199.

¹⁹⁴ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 6/35; cf. al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 3/314.

¹⁹⁵ Cf. Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 3/509.

¹⁹⁶ This idea can be compared with the attitude of those who are pretending to seek the *ḥukm* of God through the Prophet, e.g. Q.5:43. See above, p. 127.

¹⁹⁷ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1/625; cf. Abū al-Su'ūd, *Irshād*, 2/47.

¹⁹⁸ Al-Khāzin adds another condition, that is to have a clear knowledge of the textual indication (*naṣṣ*) of such laws. He also says that al-Zajjāj adds that whoever claims that any regulation brought by the Prophet is wrong is to be included under this definition. See al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-ta'wīl*, 2/276-7.

way.¹⁹⁹ Nevertheless, Rashīd Riḍā suggests that *ẓulm* refers to the non-application of the law of God, resulting in the denial of rights and justice. *Fisq* refers to the non-application of the law of God, but does not necessarily mean that rights and justice are denied.²⁰⁰ Therefore wherever God's laws are clearly laid down in the Qur'ān, there is no way of avoiding their application, even though other laws may still maintain rights and justice.²⁰¹

This discussion shows that *kāfirūn*, *ẓālimūn* and *fāsiqūn* are applied to different groups of people, based on their intention in responding to the *ḥukm* of God. This means that the *ẓālimūn* and *fāsiqūn* are believers in spite of their not implementing the *ḥukm* of God. However, *kāfirūn* has a technical meaning, the opposite of believers.

This chapter has shown that judgement by others should be made according to judgement by God, which indicates His authority over others. The following chapter will examine another important meaning of the root *ḥ-k-m*, that is, wisdom.

¹⁹⁹ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 3/314; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-ta'wīl*, 2/276.

²⁰⁰ Riḍā, *al-Manār*, 6/405. Another question is whether these definitions are applicable to those who only refuse to apply all or some of the laws of God. Al-Qurṭubī chooses the second as the right answer. See al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi'*, 6/124.

²⁰¹ Riḍā, *al-Manār*, 6/405.

PART TWO

HUKM AS

WISDOM

CHAPTER THREE

CONCEPT OF WISDOM

Another important meaning of the root *h-k-m* is wisdom, which meaning is employed by the derivatives *ḥukm* and *ḥikma*. The following study of *ḥukm* and *ḥikma* will be primarily aimed at exploring its meaning as used in the Qur'ān.

A. *Ḥukm*

This discussion consists of three sections. First, meaning of *ḥukm*, secondly related meanings of the word *ḥukm*, and thirdly further considerations which can be derived from the Qur'ānic concept of *ḥukm* as wisdom.

1. Meaning of *ḥukm* as wisdom

The word *ḥukm* as “wisdom” occurs ten times in the Qur'ān in ten verses,¹ of which only one is Medinan. Most of the verses mention that *ḥukm* is given to the prophets; only two verses might include other recipients. The exegetes have reached no agreement on the meaning of the word *ḥukm* in these verses, for they suggest *ḥikma*, *‘ilm*, *fahm*, *nubuwwa* and *qaḍā'*.

Example No.1:

The following Medinan verse is the first example:

It is not possible for a man to whom Allah has given the Book (*kitāb*), *ḥukm*, and prophetic office (*nubuwwa*) that he should say to people: “Be you my worshippers rather than Allah’s”. On the contrary (he would say):

¹ The discussion will focus on eight of ten verses in which the word *ḥukm* occurs since the other two verses give a similar result. However, the other two verses [Q.26:21 and Q.19:12] will be referred to in the other section. See below, pp. 166, 177.

"Be you learned men of religion (*rabbāniyyīn*) for you have taught the Book and you have studied it." (Q.3:79)

The word *bashar* is said to refer to either the prophet Muḥammad or the Prophet ʿĪsā.² Therefore, the Book refers to either the Qurʾān or the Injīl. The word *ḥukm* comes between *kitāb* and *nubuwwa*. The last can mean either the prophetic office itself or a high position.³ Most exegetes interpret the meaning of *ḥukm* here as *ḥikma* (wisdom),⁴ others as *ʿilm* (knowledge) or *fahm* (understanding).⁵ It is also said that it means *qaḍāʾ* (legal or judicial judgement).⁶ Al-Rāzī states that *ḥukm* is the second position after a man is given the *kitāb* and before his elevation to *nubuwwa*.⁷ This means that *ḥukm* can be derived from *kitāb*, and after possessing *ḥukm* the man is promoted to the third position, *nubuwwa*. Therefore, the exegetes' definitions of *ḥukm* are about understanding *kitāb*, namely *ḥikma*, *ʿilm* and *fahm*. Al-Biqāʿī states that *ḥukm* here is *ḥikma*, which forms a basis for *qaḍāʾ*. According to him, *ḥikma* includes both practical and theoretical knowledge.⁸ Thus in al-Biqāʿī's view, *qaḍāʾ* can be said to be a part of *ḥikma*, or, according to the other word, it means "knowledge of judgement" derived from *kitāb*.

² Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 3/323; al-Baghawī, *Maʿālim*, 1/482; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 1/482.

³ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 3/323; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 1/482.

⁴ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 3/323; al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1/370; al-Biqāʿī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 2/118; Ibn ʿAṭīyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 1/461; Riḍā, *al-Manār*, 3/346.

⁵ Al-Baghawī, *Maʿālim*, 1/482; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 1/482; al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ*, 4/78; al-Jalālayn, *Tafsīr*, 60.

⁶ Al-Baghawī, *Maʿālim*, 1/482; al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ*, 4/78. The legal or judicial judgement after this will be referred to as judgement for conciseness.

⁷ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 4/298.

⁸ Al-Biqāʿī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 2/118.

Examples Nos. 2 and 3:

The phrase “giving *kitāb*, *ḥukm* and *nubuwwa*” is used similarly in Q.6:89 and Q.45:16. These two verses are Meccan but are mentioned later in the Qur’ānic order:

These are those to whom We gave the Book, and *ḥukm*, and prophetic office. But if these [their descendants] disbelieve therein, indeed We have entrusted it to a people who are not unbelievers therein. (Q.6:89)

And indeed We granted to the children of Israel the Book, *ḥukm* and prophethood, and provided them with good things, and We preferred them above the nations. And We granted them clear proofs in matters. And they differed not until after knowledge came to them, through envy among themselves. Verily your Lord will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection about that wherein they used to differ. (Q.45:16-17)

In Q.6:89, the word “those” (*ulā’ika*) refers to the prophets whose names are mentioned in the preceding verses and also to their descendants,⁹ although some exegetes such as al-Rāzī limit it only to the prophets.¹⁰ *Kitāb* here may refer to the Torah, the Zabūr and also *ṣuḥuf* (scriptures). On the other hand, although not all the prophets received the *kitāb*, they were regarded as such on the basis that they were obliged to follow the *kitāb* [that is, the divine Book which had been revealed before them]. This definition is also applied to their descendants. As for *ḥukm*, exegetes’ opinion are divided: it could mean either wisdom [including knowledge and understanding],¹¹ as most exegetes claim or judgement,¹² which includes authority. *Nubuwwa* refers to either prophetic office or high position. In the light of these

⁹ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ al-bayān*, 5/259; Abu al-Su’ūd, *Irshād*, 2/177; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma’ānī*, 4/204.

¹⁰ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 6/417.

¹¹ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ al-bayān*, 5/259; al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi’*, 7/24; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-ta’wīl*, 2/409; Riḍā, *al-Manār*, 7/591. Quṭb says that *ḥukm* here can mean either wisdom or authority. See Quṭb, *Zilāl*, 2/1144.

¹² Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 6/418; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma’ānī*, 4/204.

differences, it seems preferable to interpret *ḥukm* as *ḥikma*, for it is more general and covers all the prophets and their descendants. From *ḥikma* are derived judgement and authority. As for *nubuwwa*, it contains the two important elements of the divine Book and wisdom.¹³ This means that all the prophets and their descendants are given the understanding of the Book. If the meaning of judgement is followed, it will not include all the prophets, for some of them did not exercise judgement.¹⁴ This assumption leads to the opinion that the Book means the divine Book itself rather than the understanding of the Book.¹⁵ Therefore, al-Zuḥaylī says that *ḥukm* here means *ḥikma* which he defines as *ʿilm*, from which judgement or the knowledge of judgement is derived.¹⁶

Q.45:16 lists God's bounties to the children of Israel, which comprise religious and worldly benefits. The former are the gifts of the Book, *ḥukm* and prophetic office. The latter are the provision of good things and the preferment of the children of Israel over the rest of the world during their historical era. The book here obviously refers to the Torah. The word *ḥukm* can have two meanings, both of which are derived from or based on the Torah: the first is "understanding the book", which the exegetes describe as "wisdom" and "knowledge";¹⁷ the second is judgement (*qaḍā*).¹⁸ "Wisdom" seems a better choice as the key meaning of *ḥukm* here for it is

¹³ Cf. Al-Biqāʿī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 2/670.

¹⁴ For example, the Prophets Yaḥyā, Ismāʿīl, Yasaʿ, Yūnus, and Lūṭ. See al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-taʾwīl*, 2/408; cf. Riḍā, *al-Manār*, 7/592.

¹⁵ For these different opinions, see al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 6/418; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 4/204.

¹⁶ Al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 7/281.

¹⁷ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 11/258; Abū al-Suʿūd, *Irshād*, 5/565; al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ*, 16/108; al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 2/388.

¹⁸ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 13/146; al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 2/388; Quṭb, *Ẓilāl*, 5/3228.

more general and the other meanings are related to it.¹⁹ A key meaning is one that functions as a general meaning of a word. The phrase “and We Preferred them above the universe” functions as a result of giving the Book, *ḥukm* and *nubuwwa*.

What could be inferred is that *ḥukm* in Q.3:79, Q.6:89 and Q.45:16 possesses its general meaning of *ḥikma*, to which *‘ilm*, *fahm* and *qadā’* are related. *Ḥukm* is to be found along with *kitāb* and *nubuwwa* in these three verses, which, with Q.45:17, are dealing with knowledge.²⁰ Therefore, it is considered to be a reference to the meaning of *ḥukm* in Q.45:16 as “wisdom”.²¹ The reason is contained in Q.45:17, which states that the schism happened after the gift of knowledge. This knowledge is chronologically implied in the preceding verse. Since the book refers to the Torah, and prophethood refers to the prophets from the children of Israel, so the word *ḥukm* is best taken to mean “wisdom”.

Examples Nos. 4, 5, 6 and 7:

In the following verses, *ḥukm* and *‘ilm* appear simultaneously four times. Q.12:22 refers to the Prophet Yūsuf, Q.21:74 refers to the Prophet Lūṭ, Q.21:79 refers to the Prophet Dāwūd and his son Sulaymān, and Q.28:14 refers to the Prophet Mūsā:

And when he [Yūsuf] reached his full strength, We gave him *ḥukm* and *‘ilm*; thus do We reward those who do well. (Q.12:22)

¹⁹ Cf. Al-Shawkānī says that it is an understanding which forms a basis for government and judgement (*al-fahm wa-l-fiqh alladhī yakūn bi-himā al-ḥukm bayn al-nās wa faṣl khuṣūmāti-him*. See Shawkānī, *Fath al-qadīr*, 5/8.

²⁰ Knowledge is understood from the use of the Book in these three verses.

²¹ This suggestion is based on the idea that wisdom is related to knowledge.

And Lūṭ We gave him *ḥukm* and *ilm* and We delivered him from the town which was working foul deeds; verily they were an evil people, reprobate. (Q.21:74)

So We caused Sulaymān to understand (*fa-fahhamnā*) it and to each We gave *ḥukm* and *ilm*; along with Dāwūd We subjected the mountains and the birds to give praise and We were active. (Q.21:79)

When he [Mūsā] reached full age, and was firmly established, We bestowed on him *ḥukm* and *ilm*. Thus do We reward those who do good (*muḥsinīn*). (Q.28:14)

The combination of *ḥukm* and *ilm* implies that they are at least somewhat different in meaning, and this may provide an insight into the meaning of *ḥukm*. *ilm* in these four verses can be said to mean or refer to knowledge of religion and laws.²² In Q.12:22, *ḥukm*, according to exegetes, means “wisdom”,²³ “prophetic office”²⁴ or “judgement”.²⁵ The last can mean either settling disputes or having authority which the Prophet Yūsuf obtained after he was released from the prison. Wisdom means knowledge which produces deeds.²⁶ This verse is located after Yūsuf was saved from the well and brought to the palace, before he faced other ordeals. Thus, al-Rāzī says that *ḥukm* here means practical wisdom. According to him, wisdom may be theoretical (*naẓariyya*) or practical (*ʿamaliyya*). Theoretical wisdom is perfect knowledge, and practical wisdom is good deeds which proceed from knowledge.²⁷ Thus, he suggests that *ḥukm* can mean two different types of wisdom. The meaning

²² Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 9/48; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 3/359; al-Jalālayn, *Tafsīr*, 237.

²³ Ibn ʿAṭiyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 3/231; al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 9/20; Abū al-Suʿūd, *Irshād*, 3/92; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 6/400; al-Jalālayn, *Tafsīr*, 237, al-Nasafī, *Tafsīr*, 2/216; al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 12/234.

²⁴ Al-Biqāʿī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 4/26; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 3/359.

²⁵ Riḍā, *al-Manār*, 12/273; Quṭb, *Ẓilāl*, 4/1979; al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ*, 9/107.

²⁶ Jalālayn, *Tafsīr*, 237; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 6/400.

²⁷ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 9/20.

of *ḥukm* as “prophetic office” in Q.12:22 can be questioned because it is not known precisely when Yūsuf was appointed as a prophet. Furthermore, the final phrase of the verse, “Thus do We reward those who do well”, seems to deny the possibility of his prophethood at that time. This is because prophethood, according to Islamic theology, is something which cannot be sought. Wisdom in this verse is related to knowledge. However, the mentioning of these two words in the same verse can imply that the knowledge refers to Yūsuf’s ability to interpret dreams, a gift with which others were not favoured.²⁸ So, it is likely that *ḥukm* and *‘ilm* refer to knowledge, the former meaning wisdom, and the latter knowledge specific to Yūsuf.

Q.21:74 tells of the Prophet Lūṭ. The exegetes suggest three possible meanings for *ḥukm*: *ḥikma*, *nubuwwa* and *faṣl* (judgement).²⁹ According to this verse, the gifts of *ḥukm* and *‘ilm* to Lūṭ were bestowed before his deliverance from God’s wrath against his people. Two meanings are possible here, *ḥikma* and *nubuwwa*. It is certain that he was a prophet at that time and so *ḥikma* was an element of prophethood conferred on him. However, it is not known whether or not he exercised *qaḍā’* to settle disputes. Furthermore, as assumed from Q.6:89, he was one of the prophets who did not exercise judicial authority.³⁰ It is preferable to choose as the key meaning of *ḥukm* one on which the other meanings are based. In this way, the most important and suitable meaning can be identified and others given considerations. Here, wisdom is the preferred choice because it can incorporate

²⁸ Cf. al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma‘ānī*, 6/400.

²⁹ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 11/60; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 4/302; al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3/124; Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 6/306; al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 2/75.

³⁰ See above, p. 149, ft. 14.

prophethood. This means that by having wisdom, a prophet is able to prove his prophethood.

In Q.21:79, the Prophets Dāwūd and Sulaymān gave their judgement in the case of the field. Although both judgements were right, the judgement by Sulaymān was preferable. Although both of them were given an understanding of the case, Sulaymān's understanding was better. This is understood from the phrase "*fa-fahhamnāhā*" (We made him understand the case [better]). This does not mean that Dāwūd did not understand the case. If that were so, how could he proceed with a judgement? The phrase means that although both of them understood the case, Sulaymān had a clearer and deeper understanding. Then the verse mentions the gifts of *ḥukm* and *ʿilm* bestowed on them. Most exegetes interpret *ḥukm* here as prophethood³¹ possibly because both of them were prophets at that time. However, this meaning does not provide a strong connection to the case mentioned in the preceding verse. It is not certain whether Sulaymān at that time was already a prophet.³² The connection should be that both of them understood the case and gave their judgement. Thus, *ḥukm* should mean either "wisdom" or "judgement". Since wisdom is essential for giving judgement and also includes a sense of understanding, it seems more appropriate as the key meaning of *ḥukm*. "Understanding" might also be considered as its possible meaning because the phrase "and to each We gave *ḥukm* and *ʿilm*" could mean "We gave an understanding [of the case]." Thus *fa-fahhamnāhā* functions as a clue to give better understanding of *ḥukm* here. This

³¹ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 9/50; Jalālayn, *Tafsīr*, 328; al-Biqāʿī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 5/100; al-Nasafī, *Tafsīr*, 3/85.

³² Al-Zuḥaylī says that Sulaymān at that time was eleven years old. See al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 17/98.

suggests that *ḥukm* here means a wisdom that includes understanding which in turn will lead to a correct judgement of the case.

In Q.28:14, the Prophet Mūsā was given *ḥukm* before he became a prophet, which is why most exegetes interpret it as wisdom.³³ Al-Rāzī considers that this is the best meaning.³⁴ Some exegetes also suggest “understanding” (*fahm/fiqh*) as another possible meaning here.³⁵ Although this meaning is not ruled out, “wisdom” seems to be the better choice as the key meaning of *ḥukm*.

In examples Nos. 4 to 7 above from the Qurʾān, *ḥukm* and *ʿilm* are used together in that order in each verse, connected by the conjunction “and”. This implies that there is a slight difference of meaning between them, yet each is related to the other. This means that both of them can stand together in such a way that *ḥukm* denotes a sort of knowledge defined as “wisdom”. As for *ʿilm*, it denotes different aspects of knowledge depending on the context. However, the choice of “wisdom” as the key meaning of *ḥukm* does not rule out the possibility of the other meanings such as “judgement”, “understanding” and “prophethood”, because they are all linked to wisdom.³⁶

Example No. 8:

My Lord! Bestow *ḥukm* on me, and join me with the righteous.
(Q.26:83)

³³ For example see Ibn ʿAṭiyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 4/280; al-Shawkānī, *Fath al-qadīr*, 4/158; al-Jalālayn, *Tafsīr*, 387.

³⁴ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 11/258. This verse can be compared to Q.12:22 above, p. 152.

³⁵ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 10/41-2; al-Baghawī, *Maʿālim*, 5/10.

³⁶ The meaning of wisdom (*ḥikma*) will be explained later in the discussion on *ḥikma*. See below, pp. 182-3.

This verse is the invocation (*duʿā*) recited by the Prophet Ibrāhīm. The exegetes give four possible meanings for *ḥukm* here: “knowledge”, “wisdom”, “prophetic office” and “judgement”.³⁷ Al-Rāzī, however, states that *ḥukm* here cannot mean “prophetic office”, because this is conferred on a person and is not something which can be acquired by personal effort.³⁸ “Wisdom” is defined here by some exegetes as the perfection of knowledge and deeds by which a person prepares to take over the government of the people.³⁹ Thus, *ḥukm* is deemed to be knowledge which produces deeds which are in turn considered essential for the authority to rule. It should be noted here that some exegetes have borne in mind the relationship between *ḥukm* and the authority to rule. In this verse, *ḥukm* appears so far to mean “wisdom” which functions here as the key meaning because the other meanings are connected to it. This does not conflict with the views of the exegetes who interpret *ḥukm* here as “knowledge”, because they further clarify that wisdom, in their words, is a perfection of knowledge which progresses with a perfection of deeds.⁴⁰

Al-Rāzī tries to give another meaning of *ḥukm*. According to him, knowledge of a subject does not exist unless someone is able to have mental pictures of it and then relate the pictures to one another, either confirming or denying their validity. He further states that if the mental pictures conform to the facts, these pictures are unchangeable.⁴¹ This is called *ḥukm*, and can be considered a literal meaning which

³⁷ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 9/453; al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3/310; al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 12/142; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 10/97; Quṭb, *Ẓilāl*, 5/2604.

³⁸ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 12/142-3.

³⁹ *Kamāl fī-l-ʿilm wa-l-ʿamal istaʿadda bi-hī li-khilāfāt al-ḥaqq wa riyāsat al-khalq*. See al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 2/158; Abū al-Suʿūd, *Irshād*, 4/168.

⁴⁰ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 12/142-3; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 10/96-7.

⁴¹ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 12/143.

is related to its root, "prevention." This understanding of *ḥukm* can be achieved only if one has a perfect knowledge of a subject.

From the verses in which *ḥukm* occurs have been chosen some in which it was interpreted as "wisdom". This interpretation also highlights other possible meanings such as "knowledge" and "understanding". Nevertheless, in examples Nos. 4 to 8 "wisdom" functions as the most practical interpretation. This suggests that "wisdom" is a general, and therefore, the main meaning of *ḥukm*. Another important point which should not be ignored is that almost all the verses which deal with wisdom are Meccan except Q.3:79 discussed above. This element is important in demonstrating that Meccan verses concentrate on the importance of wisdom rather than [judicial] judgement. However, the importance of wisdom is still emphasised in the Medinan period to show the necessity of its constant possession.

2. Related meanings

This section will discuss the meanings of *ʿilm*, *fahm*, *fiqh* and *nubuwwa*, which are probably related to wisdom as was demonstrated in the previous chapter.

a. *ʿilm*

The word *ʿilm* and its derivatives appear frequently in the Qurʾān. It is the opposite of *jahl*⁴² (doubt, ignorance and stupidity), and according to Lane, *ʿilm* is a true or certain knowledge.⁴³ According to some lexicologists, *ʿilm* denotes one of the highest qualities because it is an attribute of God.⁴⁴

⁴² *Lisān al-ʿArab*, 12/417.

⁴³ Lane, *Lexicon*, 2/2138.

⁴⁴ *Lisān al-ʿArab*, 12/417; Lane, *Lexicon*, 2/2138.

In the Qur'ān most of the occurrences of *ilm* as an attribute are concerned with God, although in some places the word is concerned with others.⁴⁵ The Qur'ān uses various forms of *ilm*, namely *alīm*, *ālīm*, *alām* and *allām*, each of which denotes the perfection of God's knowledge.⁴⁶ One Qur'ānic example of *ilm* is Q.3:18, which reads:

Allah bears witness that there is no God but He, and the angels, and those having knowledge (*ulu-l-ilm*) [also give this witness]. [He always] maintains justice. There is no God but He, the Exalted in Power, the Wise.

In this verse *ulu-l-ilm* refers to those who acknowledge God with an unshakeable conviction, which makes them able to bear witness to His Oneness. What can be inferred here is that knowledge (*ilm*) is a certain, for it is based on conclusive evidence.⁴⁷ However, Muslim commentators, when dealing with the word *ilm*, generally do not give its meaning, for it seems to them the word does not require definition. This can be inferred from al-Rāzī's statement: "The reality is that the meaning of *ilm* is illustrated as an obvious self-evident idea" (*wa-l-ḥaqq anna māhiyat al-ilm mutaṣawwaran taṣawwuran badahiyyan jaliyyan*).⁴⁸ As *ilm* denotes sure knowledge which is the opposite of ignorance and stupidity, it can function to restrain from evil on the basis that ignorance and stupidity are the expression of evil.

⁴⁵ The example is Q.12:55, which reads: (Yūsuf) said: "Set me over the store-house of the land (*khazā'in al-arḍ*); I am one who guards (*ḥafīẓ*) and who knows (*alīm*)."

⁴⁶ The example is the word *alīm* in Q.2:29, "...and He [Allah] of everything Knows (*alīm*)," which, according to al-Alūsī denotes the relation of God's knowledge with the whole, detail, existent, non-existent, finite and infinite thing (*lammā ta'allaq bi-l-kull wa-l-juz' wa-l-mawjūd wa-l-ma'dūm, wa-l-mutanāh wa-ghayr al-mutanāh*). See al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 1/219.

⁴⁷ Cf. Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 4/132.

⁴⁸ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 1/636; cf. al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 1/232; al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi'*, 1/180; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī*, 1/219.

Hence, this suggests that there is a connection between *‘ilm* and *ḥukm*.⁴⁹ In conclusion, the relation of *‘ilm* to *ḥukm* implies a certainty in acquiring knowledge which is important in restraining evil.

b. *Fahm*

The word *fahm* is usually translated as “understanding”. According to Ibn Manẓūr, *fahm* means knowledge of something acquired by heart (*ma‘rifatuka l-shay’ bi-l-qalb*).⁵⁰ Lane gives three definitions: [1] the conception of the meaning from the word or expression, [2] the quickness of the transition of the mind from extrinsic to other [i.e. intrinsic], and [3] a condition of the mind whereby it ascertains what is acceptable. He also quotes al-Āmidī’s opinion in his *Aḥkām*, which says that *fahm* is an excellence of intelligence with respect to its readiness to quickly apprehend subjects of inquiry that present themselves to it.⁵¹ For al-Rāzī, *fahm* means visualising something from the words of the speaker (*taṣawwur al-shay’ min lafẓ al-mukhāṭib*).⁵² All these definitions focus on the mind’s capability to understand what is addressed to it. The word *fahm* appears in the Qur’ān only once, that is, as *fa-fahamnā* in the story of Sulaymān in Q.21:79. This verse refers to the judgement made by Dāwūd and Sulaymān of the case brought before them.⁵³ Both of them gave

⁴⁹ Cf. See al-Alūsī where he says that *ḥikma* [another derivative of *ḥukm*] is related to *‘ilm* because *‘ilm* prevents [someone] from falsehood (*wa tuqāl li-l-‘ilm annahū yamna‘ ‘an irtikāb al-bāṭil*). Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma‘ānī*, 1/229.

⁵⁰ Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-‘Arab*, 1/429.

⁵¹ Lane, *Lexicon*, 2/2453.

⁵² Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 1/639.

⁵³ See above, pp. 151, 153.

their judgement but Sulaymān's was preferable. Here, *fa-fahham-nā* refers to his judgement, which showed precise understanding.⁵⁴

In this verse, both Dāwūd and Sulaymān are described as having *ḥukm* and *ʿilm* conferred upon them. According to al-Rāzī, these refer to the methods of judgement used by them (*bi-l-ijtihād wa ṭuruq al-aḥkām*).⁵⁵ What this verse probably demonstrates is that *fahm* is one kind of knowledge but its meaning or function can vary. This is because *ḥukm* and *ʿilm* are said to have been conferred on both Dāwūd and Sulaymān, but *fahm* was given only to Sulaymān. This shows that *fahm* is one of the supplementaries of knowledge, that is, not all knowledgeable men have precise understanding. If *ḥukm* and *ʿilm* refer to the understanding of the case brought before Dāwūd and Sulaymān, then, as al-Rāzī suggests, the *fahm* conferred on Sulaymān was “a kind of faculty of the mind and skill in inference and implication (*quwwat al-khāṭir wa-l-ḥadhāqa fī-l-istinbāt*).”⁵⁶

In a nutshell, it seems that *fahm* plays an important role in the meaning of *ḥukm*. If someone lacks *fahm*, he cannot have good knowledge or *ḥukm*. Thus, *fahm* can function as a restraint from falsehood and ignorance. In this context it can be related to the original meaning of *ḥukm*, “prevention”, from which it may be concluded that *fahm*, in the Qurʾānic usage, can stand as another definition of *ḥukm*.

⁵⁴ Cf. Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 9/49; al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ*, 11/203; al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 17/99. Al-Rāzī gives the meaning as inspiration (*waḥy*) which could be understood that this understanding is inspired by God to Sulaymān. See al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 11/169.

⁵⁵ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 11/170.

⁵⁶ See al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 11/169.

c. *Fiqh*

The word *fiqh* is a verbal noun of the verb *faquha* which literally means “understanding” the root of which is *f-q-h*. It signifies the understanding of something, knowledge thereof and intelligence. The knowledge of anything is thus termed *fiqh*.⁵⁷ It also denotes understanding (*fiṭna*) as the opposite of stupidity (*ghabāwa*).⁵⁸ According to al-Rāzī, *fiqh* is knowledge of the purpose of the speaker (*mukhātib*) in his speech.⁵⁹ He quotes the root *f-q-h* in Q.18:93, which reads: “Until when he [Dhū-l-Qarnayn] arrived between two mountains, he found, beneath them, people who scarcely understood (*yafqahūn*) a word”. Here it means understanding, that is, they understand only their own language, and the words spoken by Dhū-l-Qarnayn.⁶⁰

The root *f-q-h* appears several times in the Qur’ān and all occurrences are in the form of a verb. They generally denote understanding (*fahm*), that is, understanding what is spoken and taught.⁶¹ A careful study of this word in the Qur’ān will give a deeper insight into its meaning.

Example No. 1:

Wheresoever you may be, death will overtake you even if you are in fortresses built strong and high (*burūjin mushayyada*). And if some good reaches them, they say: “This is from Allah,” but if some evil befalls them, they say: “This is from you [Muḥammad].” Say: “All things are from

⁵⁷ Lane, *Lexicon*, 2/2429; Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, 13/522.

⁵⁸ Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, 13/523,323. According to al-Rāzī, *fiṭna* is an expression of the awareness of something which is intended to indicate it [that thing] (*ʿibāra ʿan al-tanabbuh li-shayʾ quṣida taʿrīḍuh*). See al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 1/642.

⁵⁹ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 1/639.

⁶⁰ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 10/380. Dhū-l-Qarnayn is a name of a man mentioned earlier in this *sūra*.

⁶¹ Cf. Q.18:93.

Allah.” So what is wrong with these people that they almost fail to understand (*yafqahūn*) a single fact (*ḥadīthan*)? (Q.4:78)

The root *f-q-h* here means “understanding”, that is the understanding of reality. A denial of *fiqh*, as mentioned in this verse, implies that lacking *fiqh* is similar to ignorance (*jahl*) and stupidity (*ghabāwa*).⁶² Possessing *fiqh*, means being free from ignorance and stupidity. What can be seen from Q.4:78 and also Q.18:93 is that *f-q-h* is related to words, speech and explanation (*qawl* and *ḥadīth*). This relationship implies that *f-q-h* in this context means the understanding of something or a fact mentioned by another person.

Examples Nos. 2 and 3:

Say: “He has power to send torment upon you from above or from under your feet or to cover you with confusion in party strife, and make you to taste the violence of one another.” See how variously We explain the signs (*āyāt*), so that they may understand (*yafqahūn*). (Q.6:65)

F-q-h here is related to the signs that God has explained and demonstrated, and it is used to ask those people to understand the signs properly and to give consideration to them.⁶³ *F-q-h* here denotes understanding something properly in order that the underlying significance may be grasped. This verse should be read with Q.6:98, which reads:

It is He Who has created you from a single person: [and has given you] a place of residence (*mustaqarr*) and a place of storage (*mustawda*).⁶⁴ We have explained in detail our Signs for people who understand (*yafqahūn*).

⁶² Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 4/177; al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 5/325; Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ*, 5/183; al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 5/161. Al-Alūsī relates the lack of *fiqh* to ignorance and stupidity (*wa bayānuh sūwwiqa li-taʿrīyihim bi-l-jahl wa taqbīḥ ḥālihīm wa-l-taʿjīb min kamāl ghabāwatihīm*). See al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 3/86.

⁶³ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 5/24; Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 4/172.

⁶⁴ Various explanations have been given for the words *mustaqarr* and *mustawda*. They are places of residence in the womb (*raḥīm*) and in the groin (*ṣulb*) or residences on the earth and deposition under the ground or residence in the world and deposition in a state of death. See al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 7/308.

Here *f-q-h* literally means “understanding”.⁶⁵ What should be stressed is that it refers to understanding and discerning the creation of humankind which is naturally regarded as complicated. People are therefore required to ponder and deliberate conscientiously. So *f-q-h* here conveys the meaning of the “deliberate and deep understanding of something.”⁶⁶ This understanding also implies that *fiqh* can mean “alertness” and “intelligence”.⁶⁷

Examples Nos. 4, 5 and 6:

And of them are some who [pretend to] listen to you, but We have put veils on their hearts (*qulūb*) so they [do not] understand it (*an yafqahūh*), and deafness in their ears, and even if they see every one of the signs they will not believe therein; to the point that when they come to you to argue with you, the unbelievers say: “These are nothing but tales of the men of old.” (Q.6:25)

Q.6:25 should be read with the following verses:

And surely, We have created for Hell many of the Jinn and mankind: They have hearts (*qulūb*) wherewith they do not understand (*lā yafqahūna bi-hā*), eyes wherewith they do not see, and ears wherewith they do not hear. They are like cattle, nay even more astray. They are the heedless ones. (Q.7:179)

They are content to be with those [the women] who remain behind [at home]: Their hearts (*qulūb*) are sealed up and so they do not understand (*lā yafqahūn*) (Q.9:87)

In these three verses *f-q-h* denotes “understanding”. It could be said to mean “superficial understanding” without any need for deliberation and deep thinking.⁶⁸

What should be emphasised here is that *fiqh* is related to the heart (*qalb*) where the latter is described as having been sealed and therefore unable to understand a

⁶⁵ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 5/286.

⁶⁶ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 4/233; al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 7/308.

⁶⁷ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 6/463.

⁶⁸ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 5/111.

message. The use of *fiqh* with *qalb* demonstrates that *fiqh* here denotes understanding something through the heart.⁶⁹

Example No. 7:

And it is not [proper] for the believers to go out to fight all together. Of every troop of them, a party only should go forth, that they [who are left behind] can devote themselves to studies (*li-yatafaqqahūn*) in religion, and that they may warn their people when they return to them, so that they may beware [of evil]. (Q.9:122)

This is the last verse to be considered. The verb *yatafaqqahūn*, an intensive form, is a derivative of the verb *faquha* and means “to drive oneself to understanding and undergoing hardship in obtaining it.”⁷⁰ This probably suggests that *fiqh* is not easily achieved without untiring effort

To summarise *fiqh* is different from *fahm*. If *fahm* means understanding of speech, for example, *fiqh* denotes the deliberate effort to realise and understand something, an understanding which is sometimes acquired by means of the heart. Regarding the relationship of *fiqh* to the *ḥukm*, it can be assumed that *fiqh* can mean to restrain from ignorance, which is the basic meaning of *ḥukm*. It is evident, therefore that *fiqh* can stand as another definition of the word *ḥukm*.

⁶⁹ The word *qalb* basically means heart which is described as a pineal form placed in the left side of the chest. It is regarded as a shine of humanity (Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 1/137). *Qalb* is a synonym of the secret thought (*amr*) and the mind (*ʿaql*), signifying the intellect or intelligence. (See Lane, *Lexicon*, 2/2553-4, 1803). *Qalb* in the Qurān is used as referring to the heart (*fuʾād* e.g. Q.25:32), chest (*ṣadr* e.g. Q.94:1) and mind (*ʿaql* e.g. Q.50:37). See al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ*, 1/132-3. *Qalb* is related to knowledge because the former can perceive what is left or brought by knowledge and *qalb* is a receptacle [for an idea or knowledge] which causes it to be a place of knowledge of something (*inna qulūb al-ʿibād awʿiyya li-mā ūdīʿat minā l-ʿulūm wa zurūf li-mā juʿila fī-hā minā l-maʿārif bi-l-umūr*). See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 1/145.

⁷⁰ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 6/45; al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 11/76.

d. *Nubuwwa*

The word *nubuwwa* appears five times in the Qur'ān. When dealing with the Qur'ānic use of *nubuwwa*, Muslim scholars do not give any definition for it and so it is presumed that it is easily understood. However, their explanation of *nubuwwa* can be found when they refer to *nabiyyūn*, the plural of *nabī*, which occurs first time, using the Qur'ānic order, in Q.2:61. Thus, we read:

...And they were covered with humiliation and misery, and they brought upon themselves the wrath of Allah. That was because they disbelieved the signs of Allah and killed the Prophets (*nabiyyīn*) wrongfully. That was because they disobeyed and transgressed the bounds.

The word *nabī*, plural *nabiyyūn*, is derived from *inbā'*, which means the "conveyance of a message".⁷¹ Another meaning of *nabī* is "elevation" (*irtifā'*) because of its high position. It also means path (*ṭarīq*) because it shows a clear way for everyone to follow.⁷² As for *nubuwwa*, which refers to prophethood, it is a derivative of the verb *naba'a* which literally means "to give information, tidings and news". According to al-Rāghib al-Isfahānī, *naba'*, the verbal noun of *naba'a*, signifies an announcement of great utility, from which results either knowledge or a predominance of opinion and truth.⁷³ According to al-Alūsī, *inbā'*, another derivative of *naba'a*, is used for conveying an important message.⁷⁴ So it can be said that *nubuwwa* and *nabī* both contain the idea of conveying an important message.

What can be assumed is that *nubuwwa* is a developed meaning of *ḥukm*, for *nubuwwa* was probably not used as a meaning of *ḥukm* in pre-Islamic usage. The

⁷¹ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 1/357.

⁷² Al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi'*, 1/292-3; cf. al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 1/358; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 2/147 while commenting on Q.3:44.

⁷³ Lane, *Lexicon*, 2/2753.

⁷⁴ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 1/227.

meaning of *ḥukm* as *nubuwwa* was developed by Muslim scholars commenting on its use in the Qur'ān. Therefore, *nubuwwa* is not a direct meaning of *ḥukm* but rather an explanation or developed meaning given by scholars. Nevertheless, the relation between these two words can be presumed on the basis that both concepts presuppose the prevention of evil, prevention being the original meaning of *ḥukm*.

To summarise the discussion of the meanings derived from *ḥukm* in the sense of “wisdom”, there are four related definitons: *‘ilm*, *fahm*, *fiqh*, and *nubuwwa*. The first three can be classified as one general meaning. *Nubuwwa* is a related meaning in the sense that it cannot be understood directly from all occurrences of the word *ḥukm* but only from its particular context.⁷⁵

3. Further considerations

a. Preliminary remarks

The concept of wisdom in the occurrence of the word *ḥukm* in the Qur'ān relates to the belief in God as the [Lord] Giver of wisdom to humankind. This is understood from the fact that in the verses where *ḥukm* occurs, the subject of the verb of conferring it is interpreted as God.⁷⁶ There are at least eight of these verses, all of which are significantly related to this: Q.3:79, Q.6:89, Q.45:16, Q.12:22, Q.21:74, 79, Q.26:21 and Q.28:14. The verbs *ātā* and *wahaba*, which mean “to give” and “to confer”, are used for worldly events in these verses. The following is a study of the use of these verbs.

⁷⁵ Compare with Q.12:22; Q.21:74, 79; and Q.26:83.

⁷⁶ Cf. Abdel Haleem, Muhammad, *Understanding The Qur'an: Themes and Style*. When discussing water in the Qur'ān, he says: “Such statements frequently begin with ‘it is God..., It is He who...’ as a reminder that the origin of fresh water is with God and not man,” p. 39. He also says again: “This vital sign of God’s existence, power and grace is truly worthy in the Qur'ān of thankful recognition and gratitude to its Maker who uses it to make ‘every living thing’,” p. 41.

The root of the verb *ātā* is *alif*, *tā'* and *yā'*. The verb *atā* means "to come", and the verb *ātā* means "to give". Thus *ītā'*, the verbal noun of *ātā*, means giving a gift or grant. Regarding the reference of *ītā'* to *ḥukm*, we see that the Qur'ān employs the verb *ātā* seven times. In all of these verses the verb refers to God.⁷⁷

Besides using *ātā*, the Qur'ān also uses *wahaba*. According to the dictionaries, *hiba*, a verbal noun of *wahaba*, means a gift bestowed without any cause and for no compensation.⁷⁸ Therefore, *wahaba* means "to give something without a reason and for no compensation", that is, requiring no reason nor anything in return. In the context of *ḥukm*, the Qur'ān also uses *wahaba* to state that *ḥukm* comes from God. An example of this is:

And I [Mūsā] fled from you [Pharaoh] when I became afraid of you, but my Lord gave me *ḥukm* (*fā-wahabalī rabbi ḥukman*) and made me one of the messengers. (Q.26:21)

In this verse the Prophet Mūsā admits that *ḥukm*, meaning wisdom,⁷⁹ is granted to him by God. From the verses mentioned above it is evident that *ḥukm* is given by God. It is evident also from Ibrāhīm's invocation in Q.26:83, in which he asks God to grant him *ḥukm*. This fact is supported by the verses in which *ḥikma* appears, for examples, Q.2:251, Q.2:269 and Q.3:81.⁸⁰ Both knowledge (*ʿilm*) and understanding (*fahm*), are described as given by God. The first is exemplified by Q.96:5, which reads: "He has taught (*ʿallama*) man that which he knew not." The second is illustrated by Q.21:79⁸¹ pertaining to Sulaymān's understanding which was caused by

⁷⁷ See, for example, Q.3:79, Q.6:89 and Q.45:16.

⁷⁸ *Tahdhīb al-lisān*, 2/763-3; al-Rāghīb, *al-Mufradāt*, 533.

⁷⁹ Riḍā rejects the opinion which says that *ḥukm* means prophethood. See Riḍā, *al-Manār*, 7/592.

⁸⁰ For example, see below, p. 194.

⁸¹ For quotation, see above, p. 151.

God. This granting of knowledge and understanding by God is similar to the idea of granting *nubuwwa* by God, which is mentioned in Q.3:79.⁸²

Another aspect of this analysis is the recipient of *ḥukm*. Looking at the use of *ḥukm* in the Qur'ān, it seems to be given to prophets like Yūsuf and Mūsā. If *ḥukm* is defined as denoting only prophethood, then it can be given only to prophets. However, if a broader definition is accepted, as argued in the previous section, then it follows that God can bestow *ḥukm* on anyone He pleases. This suggestion is based on two verses; Q.3:79 and Q.6:89.

Q.3:79 mentions the word *bashar* which means “a man”. The use of *bashar* has two implications: that a prophet is a man, or that something is general, that is, a man, regardless of whether he is a prophet or not. The first is obvious but the second is disputable. It cannot be denied that *bashar* in this verse refers to either the Prophet Muḥammad or ʿĪsā,⁸³ as some exegetes say, but the fact that *bashar* is indefinite implies that it might refer to a prophet or indeed to anyone on whom God might confer *ḥukm*.⁸⁴ This can be compared with Q.6:89 where *ulāʾika* refers to the prophets and can also refer to their descendants. Moreover, the occurrence of *ḥukm* between the words Book (*kitāb*) and prophethood (*nubuwwa*) does not necessarily mean that it is given only to those who are appointed as prophets. It rather suggests that *ḥukm* is related to the Book, and that the prophethood is related to *ḥukm*. Al-Rāzī does mention that *ḥukm* in Q.3:79 is related to or is the result of understanding

⁸² For quotation, see above, pp. 146-7.

⁸³ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 4/296; Ibn ʿAṭiyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 1/462.

⁸⁴ Al-Ṭabarī uses the phrase “*mā yanbaghī li-aḥad min al-nās*,” See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 3/321. Cf. al-Shawkānī, *Fath al-qadīr*, 1/435; al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 3/275.

the Book, while prophethood includes both the Book and *ḥukm*.⁸⁵ Although *ḥukm* and *ʿilm* are mentioned in Q.12:22, the prophethood is not. This suggests that *ḥukm* in this context may be given to people other than prophets. Some scholars, such as al-Baghawī and al-Khāzin, interpret prophethood (*nubuwwa*) as a high position (*al-manzila al-rafiʿa*) which can be obtained when a person acquires knowledge and understanding of certain things, especially the Book.⁸⁶ A similar expression of Q.6:89 can be found in Q.45:16.⁸⁷

The occurrence of *ḥukm* before *nubuwwa* in some verses implies the relationship of *ḥukm* to prophethood and high position. This relationship means that *ḥukm* is granted to every prophet and to those who are elevated to the high position. Therefore, such people can be said to be wise, for *ḥukm* appears to be their fundamental characteristic. Hence, it explicitly implies that the prophet and those who are in that high position are wise. What is meant by “high position” is leadership, including the government of the people. This is understood in Q.6:89 and Q.45:16.

What could be assumed here is that the existence of the prophets as the recipients of *ḥukm* is to show that they are the perfect examples of those who receive and consequently act according to *ḥukm*. Since *ḥukm* (wisdom), according to some exegetes, denotes practical knowledge [knowledge followed by deed], the prophets are the best models of those who practise the *ḥukm* that has been given to them.

⁸⁵ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 4/927.

⁸⁶ Al-Baghawī, *Maʿālim*, 1/483; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 1/482.

⁸⁷ See above, p.148.

Even though the Qur'ān mentions that *ḥukm* is a gift from God, does it mean that a person need not make any effort to obtain it? Does it also mean a responsibility is attached to a gift of *ḥukm*? Q.26:83 may suggest the answer to the first question. The verse contains the prayer (*du'ā'*) recited by the Prophet Ibrāhīm. According to Ibn 'Aṭīyya, based on the chronology of Ibrāhīm's life, this *du'ā'* was recited after he was given *ḥukm*, and thus his *dū'ā'* here means asking God to establish *ḥukm* permanently within him.⁸⁸ If this view is accepted, then there are two points arising from this *du'ā'*: (1) If someone has not been given *ḥukm*, he can pray for it; (2) If he has already been given *ḥukm*, his prayer is asking to have *ḥukm* permanently established within him. Alternatively, his *dū'ā'* could be asking to have his *ḥukm* increased.⁸⁹ However, there is no conclusive evidence pointing to either of these interpretations of this *du'ā'*.⁹⁰

The second question is best referred to Q.3:79. The sentences "Be you pious men (*rabbāniyyūn*) of Him Who is truly the Cherisher of all. For you have taught the book and you have studied it earnestly" imply two ideas:

1. A connection between those to whom *ḥukm* is given and the question of transmitting it to others. In this verse, the Qur'ān prohibits those who possess *ḥukm* from exploiting it illegally for their own benefit, for example by asking

⁸⁸ Ibn 'Aṭīyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 4/235.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 4/235.

⁹⁰ This *du'ā'* can be compared to the Prophet Muḥammad's *du'ā'* taught in Q.20:114, which reads: "Then High above all be Allah, the True King. And be not in haste [O Muḥammad] with the Qur'ān before its revelation is completed to you, and say: 'My Lord! Increase me in knowledge.'"

others to worship them. Instead, the Qur'ān asks them to teach the people by calling them to be pious men (*rabbāniyyūn*).⁹¹

2. The recipient does not have the right to claim worship for himself.⁹² This contributes to the theological element of the Oneness of God as being the only object of worship.

Thus, the verse implies that there is a sort of responsibility incumbent on the person to whom *ḥukm* is given. The responsibility can be summarised as a positive response to *ḥukm*, for example, behaving according to the purpose of *ḥukm* as in Q.3:79.

b. Discussion on *bulūgh al-ashudd* and *iḥsān* as elements of acquiring wisdom

Even though the Qur'ān states that God grants *ḥukm* to people, implying that they can ask for it, the Qur'ān underlines certain requirements for obtaining it. Two requirements can be traced from the analysis of the context of the verses in which *ḥukm* appears: *bulūgh al-ashudd* and *iḥsān*.

(i) *Bulūgh al-ashudd*

Bulūgh al-ashudd can be translated as “reaching full age.” As regard to the word *ḥukm*, the Qur'ān presents this requirement in two verses, Q.12:22 and Q.28:14: “And when he (Yūsuf) reached his full age (*balagha ashuddahū*), We gave him *ḥukm* and *ilm*...” (Q.12:22); “When he [Mūsā] reached full age (*balagha ashuddahū*), and was firmly established, We bestowed on him *ḥukm* and knowledge...” (Q.28:14)⁹³

⁹¹ Cf. Al-Ṭabarī who says that when a man is given [*ḥukm*] he should call people to know God and teach them knowledge of religion. He should be a leader in religious knowledge and a model of piety because he teaches them the Book and studies it. See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 3/322.

⁹² Al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-ta'wīl*, 1/482.

⁹³ These verse have been quoted before, see above, p. 151.

Q.12:22 states that when the Prophet Yūsuf reached his full age, God conferred *ḥukm* on him. The word *ashudd* is derived from *shidda*, the verbal noun of *shadda*, which means “firmness” (*ṣalāba*). According to Ibn Manẓūr, *ashudd* is the age when a person reaches good understanding and knowledge. It can be said that it is the age when a person is considered firm and strong, and having the potential to possess good understanding and knowledge.⁹⁴ But is *bulūgh al-ashudd* determined by a specific age? The Qur’ān does not specify any particular age for *ḥukm* which implies that none is specified for *bulūgh al-ashudd* either. Exegetes differ about the age of *ashudd*, and their opinions will be highlighted in the detail analysis of the Qur’ānic verses which deal with the idea of *bulūgh al-ashudd*.

Examples Nos. 1 and 2:

The phrase *bulūgh al-ashudd* appears eight times in the Qur’ān in verses which are generally concerned with *ḥukm* and the property of the orphan.

And come not near to the orphan’s property, except to improve it, until he [or she] attains the age of full strength (*yablughā ashuddah*); and give full measure and full weight with justice. We burden not any person, but that which he can bear. And whenever you give your word, say the truth even if a near relative is concerned, and fulfil the covenant of Allah. This He commands you, that you may remember. (Q.6:152)

It is He Who has created you from dust, then from a semen drop, then from a blood-clot, then He brings you forth as an infant and then that you may reach the age of full strength (*li-tablughū ashuddakum*), then afterwards to be old - though some of you die before, - and that you reach an appointed term [all of these] in order that you may understand. (Q.40:67)

In Q.6:152, *bulūgh al-ashudd* is mentioned as a period after childhood, while in Q.40:67, it is mentioned as a period before becoming an old person. According to these two verses, *bulūgh al-ashudd* is somewhere between childhood and old age.

⁹⁴ *Tahdhīb al-lisān*, 1/659.

The scholars have tried to identify the age of *bulūgh al-ashudd* but they come to different conclusions. Their discussion, which can be divided into two parts - the meaning and the age of *al-ashudd* - can be seen in their commentaries on Q.6:152. There are two definitions of the meaning of *al-ashudd*: the first is a strengthening of youthful faculties;⁹⁵ and the second is good understanding and knowledge.⁹⁶

In determining the age of *al-ashudd*, scholars' opinions are divided as follows: (1) the age of puberty (*bulūgh al-ḥulum*), (2) thirty years old, (3) between eighteen to thirty, forty or sixty years old, (4) twenty years old, and (5) thirty three years old.⁹⁷ Commenting on these different opinions, al-Khāzin suggests that these ages relate to the maximum age of *al-ashudd*, not its minimum. According to him, the actual meaning of *bulūgh al-ashudd* in this verse is *bulūgh al-ḥulum* which is the ability to have full control of oneself (*īnās al-rushd*).⁹⁸ On the other hand, Ibn ʿAṭīyya considers that *al-ashudd* in this verse means determination, having a clear view of the situation and dealing with it well, and he denies any relationship between *al-ashudd* and a specific age, for example forty years old. *Al-ashudd* may be attained even by a young person, that is, someone who has not reached the age of puberty. According to him, *al-ashudd* here refers to experience and mental perception that can understand a situation.⁹⁹

⁹⁵ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 5/393; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 2/467.

⁹⁶ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 6/631; al-Biqāʿī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 2/742.

⁹⁷ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 5/394; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 2/467.

⁹⁸ Al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 2/467.

⁹⁹ Ibn ʿAṭīyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 2/363. Cf. See al-Shawkānī who says that *al-ashudd* is the age of responsibility (*taklīf*) which is associated with knowledge of sensible behaviour (*īnās al-rushd*) which means that he is able to take care of himself without behaving foolishly. See al-Shawkānī, *Faṭḥ al-qadīr*, 2/183.

There is a similar discussion on Q.12:22.¹⁰⁰ Al-Ṭabarī, commenting on this discussion, considers that *bulūgh al-ashudd* can happen at any age, and therefore it is difficult to decide the exact age of *al-ashudd*. What is most important in this regard is that *al-ashudd* means the perfection of youthful development and its mental ability.¹⁰¹ Al-Rāzī holds the same view but adds that the opinion that the age of thirty-three for *bulūgh al-ashudd* matches a medical theory. According to the theory, a person grows gradually from childhood until he is fully developed, and then after this age [that is, thirty-three years old] he will face the decline of the body.¹⁰² This view is also held by the contemporary scholar, Rashīd Riḍā, although he claims that the ideal age for *bulūgh al-ashudd* is twenty five years old.¹⁰³ The definitions of al-Ṭabarī, who says that *bulūgh al-ashudd* is the perfection of youthful development, is preferable, since it avoids any dispute over a specific age. Therefore, the ages of both twenty-five and thirty-three are acceptable here.

Examples Nos. 3, 4 and 5:

Another significant point is that there is a difference between the age of *bulūgh al-ashudd* when applied to the orphan's property and to *ḥukm*. Q.6:152, which discusses the orphan's situation should be read with Q.4:6 which reads as:

And try orphans until they reach [the age of] marriage (*balaghū l-nikāḥ*), if then you find sound judgement in them (*fa-in ānastum minhūm rushdan*), hand over their property to them and do not consume it wastefully and

¹⁰⁰ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 7/144-5; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 3/359; Ibn 'Aṭīyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 3/231; al-Shawkānī, *Fath al-qadīr*, 3/16; al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 1/480; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 6/400; Abū al-Su'ūd, *Irshād*, 3/92.

¹⁰¹ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 7/175.

¹⁰² Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 9/19.

¹⁰³ Riḍā, *al-Manār*, 12/274; al-Rāghib, *al-Mufradāt*, 256-7.

hastily, fearing that they should grow up. And whoever is rich should restrain himself [from touching it], and whoever is poor may take for himself what is reasonable. Then when you hand over their property to them, take witnesses in their presence, and Allah is All-Sufficient in taking account.

These two verses discuss the right of orphans to their property where in Q.6:152 *bulūgh al-ashudd* is required in order to hand it over, and in Q.4:6 both *bulūgh al-nikāh* and *inās al-rushd* are required. It appears that the requirements in Q.4:6 explain the requirement in Q.6:152. *Bulūgh al-nikāh* in Q.4:6 refers to nocturnal emission or puberty (*iḥtilām*), which is mentioned in Q.24:59:

And when the children among you reach the age of puberty (*al-ḥulum*), let them ask permission [before entering] as those senior to them [in age] asked permission. Thus Allah makes His signs clear to you, and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.

According to Muslim jurisprudence, *iḥtilām* is the age at which someone's personal responsibility is taken into account and legal action can be applied to him. According to the Shafi'is it is the age of fifteen years, but according to the Ḥanafis it is eighteen years old.¹⁰⁴ Therefore, in the case of the orphan's property, *al-ashudd* is reached before the age of twenty which is different from the age of *al-ashudd* required for the granting of *ḥukm*. This fact can be seen in the context of *al-ashudd* in Q.28:14.¹⁰⁵ In this verse, *bulūgh al-ashudd* is used with the term *istiwā'*. *Istiwā'* is the period when youth comes to an end and the development of the body is almost completed.¹⁰⁶ In this context, although *istiwā'* happens after *bulūgh al-ashudd*, scholars cannot agree on an exact age. Their views are as follows: (1i) forty years old, (2) thirty years old, (3) between thirty to forty years old, and (4) sixty years

¹⁰⁴ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 5/27-28; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 2/12; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 2/415-8.

¹⁰⁵ See above, p. 151.

¹⁰⁶ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 10/4.

old.¹⁰⁷ Al-Rāzī inclines to the view that the age of *istiwā* is between thirty and forty years old, because by then the development of the body is almost finished and after the age of forty the body begins to decline.¹⁰⁸ Al-Alūsī thinks that the age of *istiwā* depends on particular circumstances and place, and therefore it cannot be fixed at a precise age.¹⁰⁹ He supports the view that forty years old is the age for *istiwā* with the following Arabic proverb:

When someone reaches forty and no
shyness and veil can prevent him from what he desires,
then leave him for what has happened and do not strive to change him,
even though the causes of life control his age.¹¹⁰

This proverb means that when someone reaches the age of forty, he will behave as he has always behaved and no effort can be made to change his outlook on life. This shows that by age of forty a person has an established manner and way of thinking. Some scholars follow the tradition of the Prophet who said that the prophets were appointed at the age of forty.¹¹¹ Al-Rāzī, in his justification for this tradition, says that a man of this age is considered to be in his prime and mentally alert, and is therefore suitable to be appointed as a prophet. However, the age of forty is an approximate and is not rigorously applied to every single prophet, as demonstrated by the Prophet ʿĪsā who was chosen for his mission at a younger age.¹¹²

¹⁰⁷ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 10/41; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 5/10; Ibn ʿAṭīyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 4/280; al-Bayḍawī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 2/188; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 10/261; Abū al-Suʿūd, *Irshād*, 4/27; al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3/384.

¹⁰⁸ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 12/257

¹⁰⁹ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 10/261.

¹¹⁰ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 10/261; cf. al-Rāghib, *al-Mufradāt*, 256-7.

¹¹¹ Al-Bayḍawī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 2/188; al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 12/257.

¹¹² Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 14/215.

Example No. 6:

The phrase *balagha ashuddah* also appears in Q.46:15 which reads as follow:

And We have enjoined on man to be dutiful and kind to his parents. His mother bears him with hardship and she brings him forth with hardship, and the bearing of him and the weaning of him are thirty months until when he reaches full strength and reaches forty years (*hattā idhā balagha ashuddahu wa balagha arbaʿīna sanatan*), he says: "O my Lord! Grant me the power and ability that I may be grateful for your favour which You have bestowed upon me and upon my parents, and that I may do righteous good deeds, such as please You, and make my offspring good. Truly I have turned to you in repentance, and truly I am one of those who submitting to you (*muslimīn*)."

Muslim scholars are inclined to say that *bulūgh al-ashudd* is different from reaching the age of forty. According to them, in the context of this verse forty is the maximum age at which the development of the body can be considered to be complete and after this age the body physically begins to weaken. However, the faculties of the mind continue to improve. Therefore, the age of forty in this verse refers to *istiwāʾ*.¹¹³ This view is supported by the fact that the prayer (*duʿāʾ*) in this verse is made by someone who has reached forty. This shows that at this stage he is mentally alert and has a good understanding of life as a result of having made full use of his mental faculties.¹¹⁴

From the verses quoted in the above five examples - Q.4:6, Q.6:152, Q.12:22, Q.28:14 and Q.46:15 - the *bulūgh al-ashudd* for *ḥukm* differs from that for the handover of an orphan's property. For *ḥukm* it can happen at any time between the ages of fifteen and forty and for the handover of an orphan's property it happens at the age of puberty, that is, between fifteen to eighteen years old. However, *istiwāʾ* is

¹¹³ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 11/285; Ibn ʿAṭīyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 5/79; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 13/176; al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 14/125; al-Biqāʿī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 7/128.

¹¹⁴ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 14/125.

not an essential requirement related to *bulūgh al-ashudd* because Q.12:22, concerning the Prophet Yūsuf, does not mention *istiwā'*, nor does Q.46:15. Similar to this are Q.21:74, Q.21:79 and Q.26:21. The requirement of *istiwā'* is mentioned in these verses for Mūsā, but not for Lūṭ, Yūsuf, Dāwūd and Sulaymān. In this way, the Qur'ān explains to us that *ḥukm* is bestowed on a man when he has reached full age (*bulūgh al-ashudd*). The specific age is not important, for when his body is physically strong and at its best, a man is eligible to have *ḥukm* conferred on him. It is probably true to say that *istiwā'* in this context is a confirmation of *bulūgh al-ashudd*. In other words, *istiwā'* can prove that when *ḥukm* is given to a man, he has already reached his *ashudd*.

However, there is one example in the Qur'ān, Q.19:12, where *bulūgh al-ashudd* is not applied in the granting of *ḥukm*. This verse reads: "O Yaḥyā! Hold fast the Book, and We gave him *ḥukm* while yet a child (*ṣabiyyan*)."¹¹⁵ This remark seems to indicate that in certain cases *bulūgh al-ashudd* is not required. *Ḥukm* in this verse means wisdom, which can refer also to prophethood (*nubuwwa*). It is explicitly stated here that *ḥukm* was given to Yaḥyā when he was a child. This shows that his age at that time was below that of *bulūgh al-ashudd*: the word *ṣabī* in particular indicates that he was under fifteen years, the minimum age of puberty (*bulūgh al-ḥulum*). According to some scholars, the age of Yaḥyā at that time was three, and according to others was six or seven.¹¹⁵ Al-Khāzin, commenting on Yaḥyā's age, says that God perfected Yaḥyā's mind and sent a revelation to him because his being a prophet was based on a miracle, and therefore it was possible for a child like Yaḥyā

¹¹⁵ Al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 4/211; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 8/392.

to be given *ḥukm*.¹¹⁶ This argument suggests that it is exceptional to receive *ḥukm* at a young age.

(ii) *Iḥsān*

The idea of *iḥsān*, in this discussion, is derived from *muḥsin* which refers to someone who performs a good deed perfectly or one who does much that is good or constantly does that which is good (*ḥasan*).¹¹⁷ The verb *aḥsana* means to do something well or perfectly or to do a good deed. According to al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, *muḥsin* can mean either of two things: (1) one who confers benefits on others; (2) one who does or knows something perfectly.¹¹⁸ In one tradition it is stated that *iḥsān*, a derivative of the verb *aḥsana*, means the worship of God as if one can see Him,¹¹⁹ which is an example of performing a good deed in an excellent way. Another derivative which is used for this meaning is *taḥsīn*.¹²⁰

Example No. 1:

In the Qurʾān, *muḥsin* generally refers to one who performs good deeds especially in his worship of God. This view is represented in Q.31:1-5 which reads:

Alif, lām, mīm. These are the verses of the wise Book. A guide and a mercy for the righteous (*muḥsinīn*). Those who perform the prayer (*ṣalāt*),

¹¹⁶ Al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 4/211. However, we prefer the meaning of *ḥukm* as wisdom because it avoids disputes over whether Yaḥyā was the prophet or not at that time.

¹¹⁷ Lane, *Lexicon*, 1/572.

¹¹⁸ Al-Rāghib, *al-Mufradāt*, 119.

¹¹⁹ "That you worship Allah as if you can see Him, and although you cannot see Him, He can see you." Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *Bāb al-Īmān*, n.38; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *Bāb al-Īmān*, n.57; Dāwūd, *Sunan*, *Bāb al-Sunna*, n.16; al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, *Bāb al-Īmān*, n.4; Ibn Māja, *Sunan*, *Muqaddima*, n.9.

¹²⁰ Cf. *Tahdhīb al-lisān*, 1/258.

and give *zakāt*, and in the Hereafter they believe [in certainty]. Such have guidance from their Lord, and such are the successful (*muflihūn*).

These verses underline the attributes of those who are called *muḥsinīn*, which lie in their performance of good deeds¹²¹ such as *ṣalāt* and *zakāt* with the addition of correct belief and the following of God's guidance. It is also stated here that *muḥsinīn* are those who prosper.

Example No. 2:

Q.3:134 gives more information about the attributes of the *muḥsinūn*. This verse reads:

Those [*muttaqīn*] who spend in prosperity and in adversity, who repress anger and who pardon people; verily Allah loves the righteous (*muḥsinīn*).

This verse mentions some good deeds which should be done by *muḥsinūn* and which can be classified as the opposite of bad deeds. This means that *muḥsinūn* are those who counter a bad deed with a good deed by bestowing a benefit, and by forgiving those who wrong them, instead of taking revenge on them.¹²² This refers to the opinion of al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī above, who says that one of the meanings of *iḥsān* is bestowing benefits on others.

In the following verses the Qur'ān tells us that God increases the position of *muḥsinūn* and rewards them, which shows that such people deserve His notice.

Example No. 3:

And [remember] when We said: "Enter this town, and eat bountifully therein with pleasure and delight wherever you wish, and enter the gate in

¹²¹ Al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 5/80; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 11/66; al-Shawkānī, *Fath al-qadīr*, 4/226; Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 7/179; Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, 3/441.

¹²² Al-Zuhaylī, *Tafsīr*, 4/88. Cf. Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 2/274.

prostration, and say: “*Ḥiṭṭa*”,¹²³ and We shall forgive you your sins and We shall increase [the reward] for righteous (*muḥsinīn*). But those who did wrong changed a word from that which had been told to them; so We sent upon those who had done wrong wrath from the heaven for their rebellion [against Allah]. (Q.2:58-59)

The phrase “We shall increase [the reward] for the righteous (*muḥsinīn*)” indicates that these people will receive an increased reward from God, which implies that doing a good deed (*iḥsān al-ʿamal*) is a requirement for receiving God’s bounty.¹²⁴ The content of this verse also indicates that the *muḥsinīn* are those who obey God’s order submissively.¹²⁵ According to al-Rāzī, the *muḥsinīn* are those who perform good deeds in matters of obligatory obedience.¹²⁶ Q.2:59 reveals that these people [the followers of Mūsā] disobeyed God’s orders and thus were not entitled to be called *muḥsinīn*. Instead, their bad behaviour brought down the wrath of God upon them.

Example No. 4:

And We bestowed upon him [Ibrāhīm] Ishāq and Yaʿqūb, each of them We guided, and Nūḥ We guided before him, and among his progeny Dāwūd and Sulaymān, and Ayyūb and Yūsuf and Mūsā and Hārūn. Thus do We reward the righteous (*muḥsinīn*). (Q.6:84)

In this verse the Prophet Ibrāhīm is included among the *muḥsinīn* and his gift of offspring from God was a reward for his obedience and performance of good deeds. The Qurʾānic verses referred to above show that a *muḥsin* is one who unfailingly does good deeds without ignoring any of the obligations attached to them.

¹²³ The word *ḥiṭṭa* here is used to mean removal of the sin. See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 1/341.

¹²⁴ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 1/257; al-Shawkānī, *Fath al-qadīr*, 1/152.

¹²⁵ Cf. al-Zuhaylī, *Tafsīr*, 1/168.

¹²⁶ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 2/127.

It is also clear from the Qur'ān that *ḥukm* is one of the rewards to the *muḥsinīn*. Q.12:22, for example, which refers to Yūsuf being given *ḥukm* and *ʿilm* when he reached full age, ends with the phrase “Thus do We reward the righteous (*muḥsinīn*).” The good deed that Yūsuf performed, according to the commentators, also includes his patience with what he faced earlier in his life. According to them, the phrase indicates that what Yūsuf obtained, that is, *ḥukm* and *ʿilm*, was a result of his good deed.¹²⁷ Al-Alūsī says that one may argue that good deeds are performed by those who know what good deeds are. Thus good deeds (*iḥsān al-ʿamal*) follow from the possession of knowledge of the deed, whereas in this verse it is stated that knowledge comes after good deeds. There are two possible answers to this. One is that a good deed can be performed by other means, such as the imitation of good practice (*taqlīd*) and the following of divine guidance (*tawfīq ilāhī*); or, what is meant by a good deed is one which is not necessarily derived from the divine revelation. Instead, the good deed becomes a cause of obtaining more knowledge, which in turn informs a person more about the good deed (*ʿamal*).¹²⁸ So, according to al-Alūsī’s commentaries, a person has at least a small portion of knowledge, but by performing good deeds will obtain more knowledge. This implies a strong relationship between good deeds and knowledge.

A second example is Q.28:14, which refers to Mūsā being given *ḥukm* and *ʿilm* when he reached full age, and also ends with “Thus do We reward the righteous

¹²⁷ Al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 1/480; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 6/400; al-Shawkānī, *Fath al-qadīr*, 3/16; Abū al-Suʿūd, *Irshād*, 3/92; al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2/437; Abu Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 5/293; Riḍā, *al-Manār*, 12/274. Some commentators quote al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī: “Whoever performs perfectly the worship of his Lord during his youth, Allah will give him wisdom during his middle age.” See al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2/437; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 6/401.

¹²⁸ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 6/401.

(*muḥsinīn*).” This verse is similar to the previous verse where the commentators agree that the gifts of *ḥukm* and *ʿilm* are rewards for the good deeds performed by Mūsā.¹²⁹

This discussion shows that there is a strong relationship between the bestowal of *ḥukm* and the performance of a good deed. However, this relationship probably does not mean that God will not grant *ḥukm* to those who do not do well, because there are other verses dealing with *ḥukm* which do not have a connection between *ḥukm* and righteousness.¹³⁰

B. *Ḥikma*

Discussion on *ḥikma* consists of two sections: first, the occurrence of *ḥikma* in the Qurʾān; and secondly the comparison of *ḥukm* with *ḥikma*.

1. The occurrence of *ḥikma* in the Qurʾān

The word *ḥikma* is derived from the root *ḥ-k-m* which basically means prevention (*manʿ*), that is, prevention from evil. In its most usual sense it means wisdom. According to dictionaries, *ḥikma* has been defined as knowing the best of things with the best of knowledge,¹³¹ or hitting the mark in what one says or does,¹³² or putting something in the right place.¹³³ It refers also to *iḥkām*, which means saying or doing

¹²⁹ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 10/42; Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 12/258; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 10/261; al-Shawkānī, *Fath al-qadīr*, 4/158; al-Zuhaylī, *Tafsīr*, 20/68,70.

¹³⁰ For example Q.3:79 and Q.6:89.

¹³¹ *Maʿrifat afḍal al-ashyāʾ bi afḍal al-ʿulūm*. See *Lisān al-ʿArab*, 12/140; Lane, *Lexicon*, 1/617; cf. al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ*, 3/214; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 1/229.

¹³² *Al-Iṣāba fī-l-qawl wa-l-fīʿl*. See Lane, *Lexicon*, 1/617; al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 1/428.

¹³³ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 1/385; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 1/385.

something skilfully, that is, being skilful in word or deed.¹³⁴ These definitions of *ḥikma* show that it is related to knowledge (*ʿilm*) and is reflected in the excellence of word or deed which must conform to this knowledge. Thus al-Khāzin in his *Lubāb al-Taʾwīl* describes that *ḥikma* as “something which restrains from ignorance and wrong which results from arriving at the truth in knowledge and deed and putting something in its place.”¹³⁵ According to Muslim scholars *ḥikma* in the Qurʾān has several meanings.¹³⁶ This variation is possibly due to the different contexts of the Qurʾānic verses where the word *ḥikma* appears.

The verses containing *ḥikma* can be divided into Meccan and Medinan. As for the Meccan verses they can be introduced as follows. The verses include those which concentrate on calling people (*daʿwa*) by means of *ḥikma* as in Q.16:25; emphasising that the revelation is full of *ḥikma*, as in Q.17:39; regarding the Prophet Muḥammad as in Q.54:5; and regarding the Prophet ʿĪsā as in Q.43:63. Another verse refers to the granting of *ḥikma* specifically to Luqmān. Finally Q.38:20 mentions the granting of *ḥikma* to the Prophet Dāwūd, together with the strengthening of his kingdom. The Medinan verses consist of the pairing of the Book and *ḥikma* which appears nine times in the Qurʾān. Four verses relate to the teaching of them by the Prophet to his people (Q.2:129, 151; Q.3:164, and Q.62:2), while the other two verses relate to the teaching of the Book and *ḥikma* to the Prophet ʿĪsā (Q.3:48 and Q.5:110). This pairing includes the sending down of the Book and *ḥikma* (Q.2:231 and Q.4:113) and the recitation of the Book and *ḥikma* (Q.33:34).

¹³⁴ Al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ*, 3/214.

¹³⁵ Al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-taʾwīl*, 1/148.

¹³⁶ These meanings, for examples, are prophethood (*nubuwwa*), the Qurʾān, the *sunna* of the Prophet, understanding (*fahm*) and admonition. See al-Sakandarī, *al-Ḥikam*, 8.

The bestowal of the kingdom and *ḥikma* appears twice, first on the Prophet Dāwūd in Q.2:251 and secondly on the family of the Prophet Ibrāhīm in Q.4:54. The granting of *ḥikma* to the prophets in general occurs once (Q.3:81), and to humankind once (Q.2:269). These verses will be studied with the aim of exploring the Qur'ānic concept of wisdom where it appears in the Qur'ān in the form of *ḥikma*. The discussion will begin with the Meccan verses.

Verse No. 1:

Invite [all] to the way of your Lord with wisdom (*ḥikma*) and beautiful preaching, and argue with them in ways that are best. For your Lord knows best who have strayed from His path and who receive guidance. (Q.16:25)

In this verse, *ḥikma* is used as one of the methods of *da'wa*.¹³⁷ Scholarly opinion is divided over the meaning of *ḥikma* in this context. One view understands *ḥikma* to denote revelation and the scripture (*kitāb*).¹³⁸ Others argue that it signifies a strong and convincing argument that leads to the truth.¹³⁹ Even though these two interpretations of *ḥikma* seem to be different, they can in fact be harmonised to form a basis for *da'wa*. If *ḥikma* is taken to mean wisdom in the sense of precise targeting in what one says or does, it could be said that this wisdom needs a strong and convincing argument that leads to the truth. One of the foundations of such an argument is revelation as well as knowledge derived from the divine Book. What the Qur'ān wants to stress here is the importance of knowing the best approach for calling people to Islam.

¹³⁷ *Da'wa* is a call to the way of God.

¹³⁸ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 7/663.

¹³⁹ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 9/663; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 7/487; al-Zuhaylī, *Tafsīr*, 16/267.

Verses Nos. 2, 3 and 4:

The following verses state that the revelation consists of *ḥikma*. Two verses (Q.17:39 and Q.54:5) refer to the revelation to the Prophet Muḥammad and the other relates to the Prophet ʿĪsā (Q.43:63). These verses read:

This is [part] of *ḥikma* which your Lord has revealed (*awḥā*) to you. And set not up with Allah any other god lest you be thrown into Hell, blameworthy and rejected. (Q.17:39)

And indeed there has come to them news [in this Qurʾān] wherein there is [enough warning] to check [them from evil]. Perfect wisdom (*ḥikma bāligha*) [this Qurʾān],¹⁴⁰ but [the preaching of] warners benefit them not. (Q.54:4-5)

And when ʿĪsā came with clear proofs, he said: “I have come to you with *ḥikma*, and in order to make clear to you some of the [points] on which you differ. Therefore fear Allah and obey me. (Q.43:63)

Q.17:39 is preceded by verses which underline the attitudes which the Prophet should follow and all these are conceptualised as *ḥikma*. This *ḥikma* is described as what God revealed to the Prophet, which means knowing the truth in order to practise it.¹⁴¹ Therefore it is connected with the meaning of *iṣāba*.¹⁴² According to al-Khāzin, the phrase “and set not up with Allah any other god” is connected with *ḥikma* and it is the essence of *ḥikma* (*raʿs kulli ḥikma*).¹⁴³ This implies that *ḥikma* is essential to the Muslims’ belief in God.

Q.54:4-5 are preceded by verses which reveal the attitude of the unbelievers towards the Prophet. This verse follows to remind them that much news has come to them from revelation through the Prophet which restrains them from evil. What

¹⁴⁰ Al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-taʾwīl*, 6/63.

¹⁴¹ Al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 1/571.

¹⁴² *Iṣāba* here means hitting the mark in words and deeds.

¹⁴³ Al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-taʾwīl*, 4/106.

comes from the Qur'ān about "the warners" is described as *ḥikma*, to which no attention was paid. Thus, the verse means that the Qur'ān is a wisdom which can prevent evil.

Q.43:63 states clearly that the Prophet ʿĪsā declared that he brought *ḥikma* to his people. Exegetes differ over what *ḥikma* refers to in this verse. According to them it can refer to the Injīl, *sharīʿa*, prophecy, religious knowledge or mental judgement.¹⁴⁴ These differences prove that *ḥikma* technically means *iṣāba*, which can include all these meanings. All of them intend to lead a man to gain practical knowledge,¹⁴⁵ and thus prevent him from misbehaving. Clear support for this statement comes from the verse which follows directly, that is, Q.43:64, which reads: "Verily Allah! He is My Lord and your Lord. So worship Him [alone]. This is the straight path." This latter verse shows that *ḥikma* is contained in the revelation brought by the Prophet ʿĪsā, and in turn leads a man to gain practical knowledge.

Verse No. 5:

Q.31:12 refers to the granting of *ḥikma* to Luqmān:

And indeed We bestowed upon Luqmān wisdom [saying]: "Give thanks to Allah." And whoever gives thanks, he gives thanks for [the good of] his own self, and whoever is unthankful then verily Allah is All-Rich [Free of all needs, Worthy of all praise.

Most scholars agree that *ḥikma* here means *al-iṣāba fī-l-qawl wa-l-fiʿl*¹⁴⁶ or *qawl yuwāfiq al-ʿaql wa-l-sharʿ* (words that conform to the intellect and the law).¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁴ See al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 2/377; al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 14/115; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 5/409; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 13/95.

¹⁴⁵ Practical knowledge is knowledge that proceeds with ʿamal.

¹⁴⁶ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 10/208-209; al-Rāghib, *al-Mufradāt*, 127; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 11/82; al-Zuhaylī, *Tafsīr*, 21/143.

Luqmān stands as an example of a man to whom *ḥikma* has been granted. In this case it cannot mean *nubuwwa* because Luqmān was not a prophet.

Verse No. 6:

The last Meccan verse in which *ḥikma* appears, according to the order of the *sūras* in the Qur'ānic text, is Q.38:20,¹⁴⁸ which mentions strengthening Dāwūd's kingdom, and granting him *ḥikma* and sound judgement in speech (*faṣl al-khiṭāb*) which includes soundness in speech, judgement and debate.¹⁴⁹ Al-Khāzin gives the meaning of *ḥikma* here as *nubuwwa* and *iṣāba*.¹⁵⁰ Al-Rāzī, however, interprets *ḥikma* as the perfection of the soul. According to him, such perfection is achieved in two ways: knowledge and behaviour. This means that a person is required to have a true knowledge, and must behave in the best possible way for the benefit of his life in this world and the Hereafter. Al-Rāzī states that such knowledge and behaviour are called *ḥikma* because they do not include anything contradictory to it.¹⁵¹ As for *faṣl al-khiṭāb*, al-Rāzī prefers a general meaning, that is, the ability to express anything that comes into the mind and imagination. According to him, the combination of *ḥikma* and *faṣl al-khiṭāb* is the perfection of one's *ḥikma*.¹⁵² The story of the Prophet

¹⁴⁷ Al-Biqā'ī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 1/524; cf. al-Sakandarī, *al-Ḥikam*, 8.

¹⁴⁸ For a quotation, see above, p. 83.

¹⁴⁹ See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 10/525.

¹⁵⁰ Al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 5/269; cf. al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 23/180.

¹⁵¹ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 13/298.

¹⁵² He says that *ḥikma* is the perfection of a soul and *faṣl al-khiṭāb* is the perfection of speech. See al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 13/299.

Dāwūd, as demonstrated in *Sūra Ṣād* (Chapter No. 38), shows that prophethood and wisdom are demonstrated in the ability to give judgement.

The Medinan verses mentioning the word *ḥikma* can be divided into (1) those in which *ḥikma* is paired with the Book, including the teaching, sending down and recitation of both; (2) those in which *ḥikma* is paired with the kingdom; and (3) the granting of *ḥikma* in general to the prophets and humankind.

(a) *Ḥikma* is paired with the Book

There are three aspects of the pairing of the Book and *ḥikma*, located as follows: their being taught, as in Q.2:129, 151, Q.3:164 and Q.62:2; their being sent down, as in Q.2:231 and Q.4:113; and their being recited, as in Q.33:34 [*āyāt Allāh* is used instead of *kitāb*]. In all these verses the Book precedes *ḥikma*. In the opinion of some exegetes *ḥikma* is related to the Book. This means that *ḥikma* is knowledge of the laws and secrets contained in it. From this it can be assumed that the Book is the main reliable source of *ḥikma*, which implies that the wisdom which comes from it is indisputable.¹⁵³ However, this view does not rule out the possibility of *ḥikma* being something different from the Book. This means that *ḥikma* is wisdom whose source is the teaching of the Prophet. The use of the conjunction “and” does not mean that they are necessarily identical, but rather shows that they can stand together. This suggests that the Book, like *ḥikma*, is a gift from God.

Being taught both the Book and *ḥikma* is associated with purification (*tazkiyya*), which indicates a strong connection between knowledge and purification. Both aim to turn people away from wrong belief and bad behaviour. In four verses

¹⁵³ For example, see al-Biqāʿī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 1/275; cf. al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsīr*, 2/34.

mentioning the Book and *ḥikma* together with purification, their being taught comes after purification except in Q.2:129. This is due to the context of the verse.

Verse No. 7:

For example, in Q.2:129, teaching comes first because the need for knowledge is deemed more important than the need for purification. The verse reads:

Our Lord! Send amongst them a Messenger of their own who shall recite unto them Your verses and teach them the Book and *ḥikma* (*wa yu'allimuhum al-kitāb wa-l-ḥikma*) and purify them (*wa yuzakkīhim*). Verily! You are the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.

Al-Rāzī defines *ḥikma* here as *iṣāba* which means arriving at the truth in word and deed. According to him, it is said that its basic meaning is prevention, in which *ḥikma* prevents ignorance and error.¹⁵⁴ Nevertheless, he mentions that the exegetes differ over what *ḥikma* refers to: (1) knowledge of religion (*ma'rifat al-dīn*); (2) the *sunna* of the Prophet, which he refers this to al-Shāfi'ī;¹⁵⁵ (3) judgement between truth and falsehood, derived from the meaning of *ḥukm* as judgement;¹⁵⁶ (4) ambiguous verses (*āyāt mutashābihāt*); and (5) significance of laws derived from the Book.¹⁵⁷

Verses Nos. 8 and 9:

In Q.3:164, purification is considered more important because the neighbouring verses are about booty (*ghanīma*) obtainable in battle, and thus it is

¹⁵⁴ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 2/428.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. al-Shāfi'ī, *al-Risāla*, 78.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 1/608.

¹⁵⁷ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 2/428-9.

deemed necessary to purify the believers before they go into the battle. In Q.62:2 purification is considered more important as preparation for knowledge.¹⁵⁸ Thus we read:

Indeed Allah conferred a great favour on the believers when He sent among them a Messenger from among themselves, reciting unto them His verses, and purifying them (*wa yuzakkīhim*), and teaching them the Book and *ḥikma* (*wa yuʿallimuhum al-kitāb wa-l-ḥikma*), whereas before they had been in manifest error. (Q.3:164)

He it is Who sent among the unlettered ones a Messenger from among themselves, reciting to them His verses, purifying them (*wa yuzakkīhim*), and teaching them the Book and *ḥikma* (*wa yuʿallimuhum al-kitāb wa-l-ḥikma*). And verily, they had been before in manifest error. (Q.62:2)

Verse No. 10:

...But remembers Allah's favour on you, and that which He has sent down to you of the Book and *ḥikma*, whereby He instructs you... (Q.2:231)

Both the Book and *ḥikma* are indeed considered to come from God, as shown in the phrase "what He has sent down to you of the Book and *ḥikma*" (Q.2:231 and Q.4:113). For example, in Q.2:231 above, the Prophet is asked to remember the favours that God has granted him, including the sending down of the Book and *ḥikma*.¹⁵⁹

Verse No. 11:

"And remember that which is recited in your houses of the Verses of Allah and *ḥikma*. Verily Allah is ever Most Courteous, Well-Acquainted with all things." (Q.33:34)

¹⁵⁸ Al-Biqāʿī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 1/244.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-taʾwīl*, 1/302. On the other hand Abū Ḥayyān says that the Book and *ḥikma* are specific in contrast to general favours (*takhṣīṣ baʿd taʿmīm*). See Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 2/219.

This verse refers to the necessity of remembering the gift of the Book [the Verses of Allah] and *ḥikma* imposed on the Prophet's wives.

Verses Nos. 12 and 13:

The phrase "He teaches you what you do not know" occurs in Q.2:151 and Q.4:113. Thus, the verses read:

Similarly, We have sent among you a Messenger of your own, reciting to you Our Verses and purifying you, and teaching you the Book and *ḥikma* (*wa yu'allimukum al-kitāb wa-l-ḥikma*), and teaching you that which you used not to know (*wa yu'allimukum mā lam takūnū ta'lamūn*). (Q.2:215)

Had not the Grace of Allah and His Mercy been upon you, a party of them would certainly have made a decision to mislead you, but [in fact] they mislead none except their own selves, and no harm can they do to you in the least. Allah has sent down to you the Book and *ḥikma* (*wa anzala 'alaikum al-kitāb wa-l-ḥikma*) and taught you that which you knew not (*wa 'allamaka mā lam takun ta'lam*). And ever Great is the Grace of Allah unto you. (Q.4:113)

Q.2:215 refers to the activity of the Prophet in giving knowledge to his people, whereas Q.4:113 refers to God's activity in giving knowledge to the Prophet. According to some exegetes, the phrase "teaching what you do not know" highlights two points: (1) a servant of God is not free at any time from learning even though he has acquired knowledge;¹⁶⁰ and (2) this kind of teaching is something different from the Book and *ḥikma*: either, it might not be in the Book, or it is probably based on both the Book and *ḥikma*.¹⁶¹ The second verse clearly states that knowledge and wisdom are indeed sent from God.

¹⁶⁰ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 3/150. He relates this verse to Q.20:114 which reads: "...And say: 'O my Lord! Increase in me knowledge.'"

¹⁶¹ Ibn 'Aṭiyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 2/112; al-Biqā'ī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 1/276.

(b) *Ḥikma* is paired with the kingdom

Verses Nos. 14 and 15:

Q.2:251 and Q.4:54 show the granting of the kingdom and *ḥikma* as follows:

They routed them by Allah's will and Dāwūd killed Jālūt, and Allah gave him [Dāwūd] kingdom and wisdom (*ḥikma*) and taught him whatever [else] He wills... (Q.2:251)¹⁶²

Or are they jealous of the people on account of the bounty which Allah has bestowed upon them? Well, We have bestowed upon Ibrāhīm the Book and wisdom (*ḥikma*) and We have granted him a great kingdom (*mulkan ʿazīman*). (Q.4:54)

Most of the exegetes connect *ḥikma* in Q.2:251 with prophecy (*nubuwwa*).¹⁶³ The rationale is, according to al-Rāzī, that the meaning of *ḥikma* is to put thing in the right place, and the perfection of this is achieved only through prophecy. Thus, it is possible that *ḥikma* here refers to prophecy.¹⁶⁴ According to this verse, *ḥikma* was given to Dāwūd after he became a king, whereas Q.38:20, mentioned before,¹⁶⁵ refers to strengthening the *mulk* before giving *ḥikma*. Al-Rāzī, on the basis that *ḥikma* refers to *nubuwwa*, suggests that Q.2:251 refers to God's explanation of how Dāwūd's rose from one rank to another. However, the last rank [*nubuwwa*] was higher than the first [*mulk*].¹⁶⁶ This also implies that the mention of *ḥikma* after *mulk* shows that *ḥikma* was regarded as more important. However, *iṣāba* is the preferred

¹⁶² This verse has been quoted before, see above, p. 83.

¹⁶³ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 2/645; al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ*, 3/168; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 1/564. Abū Ḥayyān mentions the other meanings such as the Zabūr, justice, knowledge and relevant action. See Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 2/278.

¹⁶⁴ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 3/509.

¹⁶⁵ See above, p. 83.

¹⁶⁶ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 3/509.

meaning of *ḥikma* in Q.2:251 and Q.38:20 for it is general and can also refer to prophecy.¹⁶⁷ In Q.4:54 *ḥikma* is mentioned before *mulk*. In this verse, the family of Ibrāhīm refers to his descendant of Ibrāhīm who preceded the Prophet Muḥammad.¹⁶⁸ The Book and *ḥikma* refer to knowledge while *mulk* refers to power. The exegetes interpret *ḥikma* here as either *nubuwwa* or generally knowledge.¹⁶⁹ This verse at least shows that *ḥikma* is important for acquiring power and strengthening it [that is, wisdom supports power].

(c) *Ḥikma* being granted to the prophets and humankind in general

Verses Nos. 16 and 17:

And He [Allah] will teach him the Book and *ḥikma*, and the Torah and the Injil. (Q.3:48)

Remember when Allah will say [on the Day of Resurrection]: “O ʿĪsā, son of Maryam! Remember My Favour to you and to your mother when I supported you with *Rūḥ al-Qudus* so that you spoke to the people in the cradle and in maturity; and when I taught you the Book, *ḥikma*, the Torah and the Injil... (Q.5:110)

These verses mention granting *ḥikma* to the Prophet ʿĪsā in the sense that God taught him *ḥikma*. This teaching comes with the teaching of the Book, the Torah and the Injil (*al-kitāb wa-l-ḥikma wa-l-Tawrā wa-l-Injīl*).¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁷ Abū Ḥayyān gives the first meaning of *ḥikma* here as *iṣāba*, for the perfection of *ḥikma* is achieved through prophecy. Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 2/278.

¹⁶⁸ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 5/253; al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 1/219. The Prophet Muḥammad also can be included because he was one of the descendants.

¹⁶⁹ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 5/253; al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 1/219; al-Biqāʿī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 2/268; Ibn ʿAṭīyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 2/68.

¹⁷⁰ Seeing that the Torah and the Injil are mentioned some exegetes define the Book as an example of the art of writing (*kitāba*). See Al-Bayḍāwī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*, 1/160; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 1/452.

Verses Nos. 18 and 19:

The following verses show that *ḥikma* is granted to the prophets [Q.3:81] and also to others in general [Q.2:269]:

And remember when Allah took the covenant of the prophets saying: "Take whatever I gave you from the Book and *ḥikma* and afterwards there will come to you a Messenger... (Q.3:81)

He grants wisdom (*ḥikma*) to whom He pleases, and to whom wisdom is granted receives indeed a benefit overflowing. But none will grasp the message but men of understanding. (Q.2:269)

Q.3:81 still maintains the pairing of the Book and *ḥikma*, which does not occur in Q.2:269. Q.2:269 says that whoever is granted *ḥikma* receives overflowing benefit. The exegetes differ about the meaning of *ḥikma* here. Generally their opinions can be summed up in six categories: [1] the Qurān; [2] *iṣāba*; [3] *ʿilm*; [4] *fahm*; [5] reverential fear (*khashya*); and [6] *nubuwwa*.¹⁷¹ Al-Ṭabarī and al-Qurṭubī say that all these meanings are closely related because they originate in the meaning of *ḥikma* as *iṣāba*.¹⁷² This is because *iṣāba* is the result of *ʿilm*, *fahm* and *maʿrifa*. Thus one who attains the truth (*muṣīb*) is one who exercises *fahm*, *khashya* and *ʿilm*. *Iṣāba* also includes *nubuwwa*, which refers to one who has understanding (*fahm*) and whose speech and behaviour conform to the truth (*iṣāba*).¹⁷³ On the other hand, al-Biqāʿī, when commenting on Q.2:269, says that *ḥikma* is a quality consisting of two components: knowledge and just action (*al-fīl al-ʿadl*), where the latter is a deed

¹⁷¹ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 3/89-91; al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 3/620; al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ*, 3/213; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-Maʿānī*, 2/40.

¹⁷² Or *itqān fī-l-qawl wa-l-fīl*.

¹⁷³ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 3/91; al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ*, 2/214; cf. al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 1/377.

conforming to knowledge, that is, of the *sharīʿa*.¹⁷⁴ Here he suggests another meaning of *ḥikma*, namely, justice (*ʿadl*).¹⁷⁵

The following conclusions may be drawn from this analysis:

1. *Ḥikma* means precision in speech and action (*iṣāba*), which is related to knowledge. This is because without knowledge nobody can attain the truth and understand it. Thus *ḥikma* assumes knowledge followed by appropriate deeds.

Al-Rāzī gives a justification for this:

Know that wisdom (*ḥikma*) cannot stand independently of these two things, that is knowledge and action, because the perfection of man is obtainable in two matters: he knows the truth and [he knows] the good for the purpose of practising. The first refers to knowledge and true apprehension¹⁷⁶ and the second just and true action.¹⁷⁷

As with the word *ḥukm*, exegetes produced other interpretations of *ḥikma* such as *fahm*, *ʿilm* and *nubuwwa*, which are not far removed from the meaning of *iṣāba*.

This implies that *ḥikma*, like *ḥukm*, also includes true understanding and practical knowledge and, as a result of these, knowledge which leads to happiness in this world and the hereafter.¹⁷⁸

2. Wisdom is deemed important as it was a revelation and a basis of promoting religion (verses nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4).

¹⁷⁴ Al-Sakandari, *al-Ḥikam*, 10.

¹⁷⁵ The word *ʿadl* is probably a synonym of the word *ḥikma* on the basis that both of them are defined as putting something in its proper place. Therefore, some dictionaries give *ʿadl* as another meaning of *ḥikma*. See *al-Muʿjam al-wasīf*, 1/189; al-Fīrūzābādī, *al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ*, 4/99.

¹⁷⁶ True apprehension here means understanding which is in agreement with the facts (*al-idrāk al-muṭābiq*).

¹⁷⁷ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 3/621; Quṭb, *Ẓilāl*, 1/458.

¹⁷⁸ *Al-Fahm al-ṣaḥīḥ wa-l-ʿilm al-nāfiʿ wa-itbāʿ al-maʿlūm al-muʿaddi ilā saʿādat al-dunyā wa-l-ākhirā*. See al-Zuhaylī, *Tafsīr*, 3/63.

3. There is a strong relationship between the Book and *ḥikma* and, by extension, power. As far as the Book and *ḥikma* are concerned, there are at least two exegetes who overtly state that both are clearly related to each other, and no exegetes that I know of who have denied this.¹⁷⁹ The conjunction “and” which implies a difference but interconnection supports this argument. This means that although *ḥikma* is not identical to the Book, it is connected with it. *Ḥikma* might or might not be something derived from the Book but it is not in contradiction to it. Its pairing with the Book shows that it is another stage in knowledge that can be gained from the Book.¹⁸⁰

Teaching the Book requires less effort than teaching *ḥikma*. Teaching the Book focuses on the superficial meaning of its laws, whereas teaching *ḥikma* delves into the inner and hidden meanings of the text. Therefore, the former requires practice (*ʿamal*), whereas the latter requires the mind to be exercised before practice.¹⁸¹

The combination of the Book and *ḥikma* is related to “kingdom” (verses nos. 6, 14 and 15), which means that they are essential for possessing and strengthening it. “Kingdom” here refers to power and authority, as shown in Q.38:20, Q.2:251 and Q.4:54. Q.38:20 and Q.2:251 mention the granting of kingdom and *ḥikma* to Dāwūd. When compared to Q.2:251, which implies a relationship between power and *ḥikma*, Q.2:247, which refers to the appointment

¹⁷⁹ See above, fn. 153, p. 188.

¹⁸⁰ For example, see al-Biqāʿī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 1/276.

¹⁸¹ Al-Biqāʿī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 1/276.

of ʿĀlūt as a king of the children of Israel, in turn implies a relation between knowledge and power. The verse reads:

He said: "Verily Allah has chosen him above you and has increased him abundantly in knowledge and stature (*wa zādahū baṣṭatan fī-l-ilm wa-l-jism*) and Allah grants His kingdom to whom He wills (*wa llāhu yuʿī mulkahū man yashā*) ..."

In Q.4:54, the Qurʾān mentions the granting of the Book, *ḥikma* and a great kingdom [power] to the family of Ibrāhīm.

4. Verses nos. 7, 8 and 9 show that the teaching of the Book and *ḥikma* is related to the purification. This task was carried out by the messenger of God.
5. Wisdom is conferred not only on messengers but also on humankind in general (verses nos. 5 and 19).
6. Belief in God. This is shown in the phrase "Allah granted him *ḥikma*" [Q.2:251], which exemplifies that everything comes from God. In addition, it indicates a relationship between a man and his Lord, which in turn implies a belief in God. Thus, in Q.31:12 (verse no. 5), it precedes the giving of thanks to God; in Q.4:113 (verse no.13), it follows the thwarting by the Grace of God of the decision by some people to mislead the Prophet; in Q.2:251 (verse no. 14) the phrase follows the defeat of Jālūt with the permission of God; in Q.4:54 (verse no. 15), it follows the reminder of God's Grace to the Prophet.

1. The comparison of *ḥukm* with *ḥikma*

In the preceding discussion *ḥikma* was taken to mean wisdom, which was then defined as *iṣāba*. It is useful to compare *ḥukm* with *ḥikma* according to their occurrence in the Qurʾān. The comparison below will attempt to give a clear picture of how the Qurʾān uses these two terms in their meaning of wisdom.

1. It has already been stated that *ḥikma* basically means wisdom while *ḥukm* does not necessarily mean wisdom in every context. Ten verses where the word *ḥukm* occurs were identified in which the word is taken to mean wisdom rather than judgement.¹⁸² *Ḥukm* is therefore used differently from *ḥikma*. *Ḥukm* in its Meccan form means wisdom and judgement in the sense of general judgement, whereas in its Medinan form, with the exception of one verse (Q.3:79), it means legal judgement. *Ḥikma*, however, means wisdom in both the Meccan and Medinan verses.
2. As previously been stated, *ḥukm* meaning wisdom occurs ten times in the Qur'ān in ten verses, of which only one is Medinan. *Ḥikma* occurs twenty times in nineteen verses. Thirteen of these verses are Medinan, in which *ḥikma* appears fourteen times. It seems that in the Meccan period the Qur'ān uses *ḥukm* more frequently when referring to wisdom, whereas in the Medinan period *ḥikma* takes priority. However, to the best of knowledge, exegetes have not identified this particular feature.
3. *Ḥukm* in its meaning as wisdom occurs as a gift in connection with the Book and prophethood in three verses: Q.3:79, Q.6:89 and Q.45:16 (verses nos. 1, 2 and 3). In conjunction with knowledge it occurs four times: Q.12:22, Q.21:74,79 and Q.28:14 (verses nos. 4, 5, 6 and 7). *Ḥikma*, as it appears in the Meccan verses, deals with three aspects: (1) revelation, as in Q.17:39 (verse no. 2); (2) the giving of *ḥikma* to Dāwūd, as in Q.38:20 (verses no. 6) and Luqmān, as in Q.31:12 (verse no. 5); and (3) conveying the message based on *ḥikma*, as in Q.16:125 (verse no. 1). In the Medinan verses, *ḥikma* also deals with three aspects: (1) the pairing of

¹⁸² See pp. 146-156, 166 and 177 above.

the Book and *ḥikma*, which includes their being taught, as in Q.2:129 (verse no. 7); (2) the pairing of *mulk* and *ḥikma*, as in Q.2:251 (verse no. 14); (3) and the gift of *ḥikma*, as in Q.2:269 (verse no. 19).

4. The combination of the Book, *ḥukm* and *nubuwwa* occurs in the Meccan verses while the pairing of the Book and *ḥikma* occurs in the Medinan verses. Both are stated as given by God. This suggests two implications: (1) the Meccan style of establishing the concept of belief implies that knowledge and wisdom are the essential elements of *nubuwwa* whereas the Medinan styles of establishing the ideal of society implies that knowledge and wisdom are the essential for an establishing society; (2) the Medinan verses, as Rosenthal suggests, help to understand the Meccan verses, that is, *ḥikma* suggests that *ḥukm* means wisdom.¹⁸³ On the other hand, the pairing of the teaching of the Book and *ḥikma* suggests that knowledge and wisdom are the basis of religious knowledge.¹⁸⁴
5. It would seem that wisdom is intended to lead man to the "highest position" and "power". This is demonstrated by the occurrence of the word *ḥukm* and *ḥikma*. The word *ḥukm* occurs in connection with the word *nubuwwa*, the latter being either prophethood or high position.¹⁸⁵ Q.12:22, in the story of the Prophet Yūsuf, which will be further discussed, also implies this idea.¹⁸⁶ The word *ḥikma* is more explicit in demonstrating this idea as it occurs with the word *mulk*.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸³ F. Rosenthal, *Knowledge Triumphant*, 38.

¹⁸⁴ Cf. Rosenthal, *Knowledge Triumphant*, 37.

¹⁸⁵ For example, see above, example no. 1 pp. 146-7.

¹⁸⁶ See below, p. 214.

¹⁸⁷ See above, verses nos. 6, 14 and 15 pp. 187, 192.

C. *Ḥakīm*

Ḥakīm occurs more often in the Qur'ān than any other derivative of the verb *ḥakama*, that is, ninety seven times. *Ḥakīm* means someone who is full of wisdom (*ḥikma*) or one who does something perfectly.¹⁸⁸ This latter meaning is possibly based on the fact that one of the meanings of *ḥikma* is to do something skilfully. According to al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, *ḥakīm* as an attribute of God means knowing about something, and consequently creating it in a perfect condition.¹⁸⁹ If *ḥikma* is attributed to humanity, it means the knowledge of something and the performing of good deeds.¹⁹⁰ *Ḥakīm* in the Qur'ān is used as an attribute of God, the Qur'ān, and a matter (*amr*) decided by God. These uses will be discussed.

1. *Ḥakīm* as an attribute of God

The use of *ḥakīm* as an attribute of God is associated with seven other attributes: *ʿalīm* (the All-Knowing); *ʿazīz* (the All-Powerful); *ḵabīr* (the All-Aware); *tawwāb* (the Most Forgiving); *ḥamīd* (Worthy of all praise); *ʿalī* (the Lofty); and *wāsiʿ* (the Sufficient). The relationship between these attributes and *ḥikma* depends on the content of a particular verse in which these attributes occur and not on any link between the attributes themselves. Such a link is called an ending clause (*al-jumla al-tadhyiliyya*). Here it comes at the end of a Qur'ānic verse, giving a further explanation of the content of that verse. This clause also sometimes appears as a

¹⁸⁸ *Tahdhīb al-lisān*, 1/280. This meaning makes *ḥikma* similar to *iḥkām*, i.e. doing something perfectly.

¹⁸⁹ *Al-Mufradāt*, 126.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 126.

cause clause (*al-jumla al-ta^cliliyya*) which functions as the reason for the content of that verse.¹⁹¹

Example No. 1:

The phrase “the All-Knowing, the All-Wise” is mentioned twenty nine times in the Qur’ān, while the phrase “the All-Wise, the All-Knowing”, in which the attribute of wisdom precedes that of knowledge is mentioned seven times. Using the Qur’ānic order, *ḥakīm* first occurs as an attribute of God in Q.2:32. It is mentioned in connection with the creation of Ādam as a vicegerent (*khalīfa*) on the earth, and it is preceded by *‘alīm*, another attribute of God. The verse reads:

They said: “Glory be to You! We have no knowledge except what You have taught us. Verily, it is You, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise” (*‘alīm ḥakīm*).

The form *fa^cīl*, on which *‘alīm* and *ḥakīm* are based, denotes exaggeration (*mubālagha*)¹⁹² and stability,¹⁹³ thus implying the greatness of the attribute, in this case God. The phrase “the All-Knowing, the All-Wise” explicitly refers to the content of the verse where *‘alīm* can be interpreted as referring to God’s knowledge. According to some exegetes, *‘alīm* precedes *ḥakīm* because it is more appropriate to the content of this verse which mentions that God asked the angels to give the names [of things].¹⁹⁴ *Ḥakīm*, which is possibly based on His knowledge, refers to His decision to create and

¹⁹¹ Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān fī ‘ulūm al-Qur’ān*, 3/221, 224.

¹⁹² Ibn ‘Aṭīyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 1/122; cf. al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, 1/280; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-Ma‘ānī*, 1/229; al-Shawkānī, *Fath al-qadīr*, 1/125-6.

¹⁹³ Riḍā, *al-Manār*, 1/264.

¹⁹⁴ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma‘ānī*, 1/229; Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 1/298.

appoint Ādam as a vicegerent.¹⁹⁵ On the other hand, it can be assumed that in the decision to appoint Ādam as vicegerent *ḥakīm* is based on His knowledge of creating a vicegerent, and therefore *ḥakīm* results from *ʿalīm*, that is, wisdom is a result of knowledge and both are important in making a significant decision. Al-Rāzī gives two possible meanings of *ḥakīm*: someone who has knowledge, and someone who does something to which there is no objection. The latter is preferred by him; since the first implies a repetition of knowledge.¹⁹⁶ The latter meaning of *ḥakīm* is more practical because it has a comparatively close connection to its original meaning of prevention. Thus, someone who is *ḥakīm* prevents any objection and defect. However, the exegetes give three meanings of *ḥakīm* in this context:

1. possessing wisdom (*ḥikma*).¹⁹⁷
2. a fair judge (*al-qāḍī al-ʿādil*).
3. one who does something perfectly (*muḥkim*).¹⁹⁸

These meanings can be said to refer to one meaning, wisdom (*ḥikma*), which is held by many exegetes to contain the other two meanings, *qāḍī* and *muḥkim*, which in turn are related to wisdom (*ḥikma*) on two bases:

1. The original meaning of *ḥikma* is prevention (*manʿ*), where all these three meanings denote the avoidance of any defect.
2. *Qāḍī* and *muḥkim* are based on wisdom which suggests that without wisdom, one cannot be an effective *qāḍī* and *muḥkim*.

¹⁹⁵ Cf. Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 1/229; Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 1/298; al-Biqāʿī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 1/91.

¹⁹⁶ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 1/645-6.

¹⁹⁷ Ibn ʿAṭīyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 1/122; al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 1/280. Cf. Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 1/298; al-Biqāʿī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 1/91.

¹⁹⁸ Ibn ʿAṭīyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 1/122; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 1/62.

Thus, it can be postulated here that the interpretation of *ḥakīm* as one who is full of wisdom is preferable and more practical than the other two meanings stated by some exegetes.

Example No. 2:

That was Our proof which We gave Ibrāhīm against his people. We raise whom We will in degrees. Verily, your Lord is the All-Wise (*Ḥakīm*), the All-Knowing (*ʿAlīm*). (Q.6:83)

The verse concerns the granting of God's proof to the Prophet Ibrāhīm. Al-Ṭabarī comments that God is full of wisdom in the management of His creation and the giving of proof to His prophets. He is full of knowledge of the outcome of His Messengers and the people to whom the Messengers have been sent.¹⁹⁹ In this verse *ḥakīm* precedes *ʿalīm* as an attribute of God. The attributes refer to God's action in giving Ibrāhīm the "proof".²⁰⁰ Most exegetes do not give any reason for *ḥakīm* precedes *ʿalīm*. However, al-Biqāʿī tries to give a justification for this word order. He says that the arguments brought by Ibrāhīm in his debate with his people, mentioned in Q.6:82, was based on his wisdom and the excellence of his logical thinking, which came from the knowledge given to him by God. Thus, it is more appropriate in this verse to place *ḥakīm* before *ʿalīm*.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁹ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 5/256.

²⁰⁰ Proof here refers to the arguments that the Prophet Ibrāhīm used to state the Oneness of God. See al-Zuhaylī, *Tafsīr*, 7/269.

²⁰¹ Al-Biqāʿī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 2/664.

Examples Nos. 3, 4 and 5:

The following verses illustrate the pairing of the attributes of *ḥakīm* and *ʿazīz*. *ʿAzīz* here means one who has power and cannot be overcome. The existence of this attribute, as emphasised earlier, is related to the content of the verse, where it is mentioned at the end.

The sending down [revelation] of the Book is from Allah, the All-Powerful (*ʿAzīz*), the All-Wise (*Ḥakīm*). (Q.39:1)

This verse states that the Book [the Qurʾān] is sent down by God, Who is the Sublime and the Wise. Both of these attributes are relevant here when stating that the Qurʾān is from Him. The attribute All-Powerful means that He has an absolute power in His deeds without any need of help from others.²⁰² *Ḥakīm* refers to His decision of sending the Book. What is significant here is that *ʿazīz* precedes *ḥakīm*.²⁰³ Al-Rāzī justifies this significance by stating that man's realisation of God's power, that is, the sign of His power in the creation of the universe, appears in man's mind before his realisation of God's knowledge.²⁰⁴ In other words, he knows that God is the All-Powerful before he realises that God is also the All-Knowing.

Q.48:7 reads:

And to Allah belong the hosts of the heavens and the earth, and Allah is Ever All-Powerful (*ʿazīz*), All-Wise (*ḥakīm*).

This verse should be compared with Q.48:4, which reads:

He it is Who sent down calmness into the hearts of the believers, that they may grow more in faith along with their [present] faith. And to Allah belong the hosts of the heaven and the earth, and Allah is Ever All-Knowing (*ʿalīm*), All-Wise (*ḥakīm*).

²⁰² Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 13/377-8.

²⁰³ From the survey, it is obvious that the phrase *ʿazīz ḥakīm* comes only in this form, that is, *ʿazīz* precedes the word *ḥakīm*.

²⁰⁴ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 4/135. This view is represented by him when interpreting Q.3:18 concerning the phrase "*ʿazīz ḥakīm*."

These two verses have a similar content, “To Allah belongs the hosts of the heaven and the earth”, but the final phrases are different. In Q.48:7 the last phrase is “All-Powerful, All-Wise” (*‘azīz ḥakīm*), whereas in Q.48:4 is “All-Knowing, All-Wise” (*‘alīm ḥakīm*). According to al-Alūsī, this is due to the fact that Q.48:7 refers to the power of God to send down His punishment upon His creation, as mentioned in the preceding verse, which proves His greatness, whereas Q.48:4 refers to God’s skilful administration of the universe, which proves His knowledge.²⁰⁵ *Ḥakīm* in both verses refers to God’s wisdom in managing the affairs of His creation.²⁰⁶

Example No. 6:

The next example shows the pairing of *‘alī* and *ḥakīm*. Thus, we read in Q.42:51:

It is not given to any human being that Allah should speak to him unless [it be] by revelation or from behind a veil or [that] He sends a messenger to reveal what He wills by His Leave. Verily He is Most High (*‘alī*), Most Wise (*ḥakīm*).

The verse describes how God gives the revelation to His messengers. The attribute *‘alī* shows that God is completely different from His creation while the attribute *ḥakīm* demonstrates His Wisdom in sending down the revelation in different ways.²⁰⁷

Example No. 7:

The next example shows the combination of *wāsi‘* and *ḥakīm*. Thus, we read in Q.4:130:

²⁰⁵ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma‘ānī*, 13/249.

²⁰⁶ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, 11/336.

²⁰⁷ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 14/68; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma‘ānī*, 13/57.

But, if they separate, Allah will provide abundance for everyone of them from His bounty. Verily Allah is ever All-Sufficient (*wāsi^c*) [in bounty], All-Wise (*ḥakīm*).

The word “sufficient” (*wāsi^c*) [in bounty] comes at the end of this verse because the content mentions God’s promise that He will sustain both husband and wife. It is therefore suitable to mention at the end that He is generous in giving bounty and sustenance.²⁰⁸ *Ḥikma* can be assumed here to indicate that He is Wise in His decision to provide sustenance for His creatures.

Example No. 8:

The next example shows the combination of *ḥakīm* and *khābīr*. Thus, we read in Q.34:1:

The Praise belongs to Allah, to whom belong whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth; and to whom also belongs praise in the Hereafter. He is the All-Wise (*ḥakīm*), the All-Aware (*khābīr*).

The verse states that God deserves all praise. It implies that the creation of everything in the universe is based on His wisdom.²⁰⁹ Al-Ṭabarī comments on *ḥakīm* *khābīr* that God is All-Wise in His management of His creation, and He is All-Aware of it, what suits it and whatever it is doing.²¹⁰ According to some exegetes, what differentiates *ḥakīm* from *khābīr* is that the former refers to God’s knowledge of an action, pure and simple whereas the latter refers to His knowledge of the consequences of that action (*al-^cilm bi-^cawāqib al-umūr*).²¹¹ Here, the phrase “*ḥakīm*

²⁰⁸ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 5/478.

²⁰⁹ Al-Rāzī says that wisdom (*ḥikma*) is knowledge which is related to an action. Thus one who has knowledge but does not act according to that knowledge is not called a *ḥakīm*. See al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 12/63.

²¹⁰ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi^c al-bayān*, 10/344.

²¹¹ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 12/63; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma^cānī*, 11/279.

khabīr” indicates the greatness of God’s knowledge and His deeds, which consists of wisdom.

Example No. 9:

The next example shows the combination of *ḥakīm* and *tawwāb*. Thus, we read in Q.24:10:

And had it not been for the grace of Allah and His mercy on you and that Allah is the Most Forgiving (*tawwāb*), the All-Wise (*ḥakīm*).

The verse describes God’s mercy to those who accused their wives of adultery (*liʿān*). Here *tawwāb* means God’s forgiveness of those who repent of their wrong behaviour. *Ḥakīm* can be assumed to refer to His laws regarding accusing women of adultery (*liʿān*) and the punishment for such behaviour.²¹²

Example No. 10:

The next example shows the combination of *ḥakīm* and *ḥamīd*. Thus, we read in Q.41:42:

Falsehood cannot come to it [revelation] from before it or behind it; it [revelation] is sent down by the All-Wise (*ḥakīm*), Worthy of all praise (*ḥamīd*).

In this verse *ḥakīm* indicates His wisdom in sending down the revelation, while *ḥamīd* means that He is praiseworthy for His bounty to His creation.²¹³

This discussion shows that *ḥakīm* in all the verses above refers to God’s actions, in which He uses His perfect wisdom to act in the perfect manner. Wisdom

²¹² Al-Zuhaylī, *Tafsīr*, 18/157.

²¹³ Ibid., 24/42.

refers to decisions and actions, which suggests that wisdom differs slightly from knowledge in the sense that the former is more concerned with the action.

2. *Ḥakīm* as an attribute of the Qur'ān

This kind of attribute appears five times in the Qur'ān. If *ḥakīm* means someone who is wise or full of wisdom, then the Qur'ān is full of wisdom in its verses and laws (*aḥkām*), which reflects the excellence of knowledge and practical advice contained in it. In addition, since the Qur'ān is the word of God, this wisdom is indeed the wisdom of God.

The word *ḥakīm* in the context of the Qur'ān can be divided into two forms:

1. It is mentioned once specifically with the word Qur'ān in Q.36:2, which reads: "By the Qur'ān, full of wisdom (*ḥakīm*)."
2. It is mentioned with words referring to the Qur'ān. These can be divided into two forms:
 - (a) *Dhikr*, once, as in 3:58, which reads: "This is what We recite to you of the verses, and the wise reminder (*al-dhikr al-ḥakīm*)"
 - (b) *Kitāb*, three times; in Q.10:1, which reads: "*Alif, Lām, Rā*, these are the verses of the Book that is full of wisdom (*ḥakīm*)"; Q.31:2, which reads: "*Alif, Lām, Mīm*, these are the verses of the Book that is full of wisdom (*ḥakīm*)"; and Q.43:4, which reads: "And verily, it is in the mother of the Book with Us, indeed exalted, full of wisdom (*ḥakīm*)."

Q.36:2 implies that the whole discussion and content in this *sūra* contain wisdom. However, the exegetes have several opinions on the description of the Qur'ān as *ḥakīm*.²¹⁴

1. Full of wisdom. This can be assessed from three aspects:

(a) Possessing wisdom in the following ways:

(i) Differentiating between truth and falsehood.²¹⁵

(ii) The organisation of the Qur'ānic verses and the knowledge contained in them.²¹⁶

(iii) Qur'ānic indication of admonitions and laws for the believer.²¹⁷

(b) Speaking of wisdom, for it consists of wisdom.²¹⁸

(c) Performing a wise action with a desired result. This meaning is symbolic (*majāz*) of the fact that the Qur'ān contains wisdom and goodness.²¹⁹

2. *Hākim*, meaning a judge (*qāḍī*). This meaning is based on the fact that the Qur'ān contains laws (*aḥkām*).²²⁰

3. *Muḥkam* which has two meanings:

(a) Its basic meaning of prevention (*manʿ*), which takes two points here:

(i) The Qur'ān is free from defect.²²¹

²¹⁴ This summary is the result of a survey of their opinions on Q.3:58, 10:1, 31:2, 36:2, and 43:4.

²¹⁵ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 3/292.

²¹⁶ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 4/248.

²¹⁷ Riḍā, *al-Manār*, 3/318.

²¹⁸ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 4/248; Ibn ʿAṭīyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 1/446; Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 2/499; al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1/360.

²¹⁹ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 8/238; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 3/220.

²²⁰ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 4/248; Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 2/499; al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1/360; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 3/220.

(ii) The Qur'ān is free from falsehood.²²² Both of these meanings are based on prevention (*iḥkām*),²²³ which goes back to the Arabic word, *manʿ*.

(b) The explanation of its content, that is, the laws (*aḥkām*).²²⁴

4. *Maḥkūm bi-hī*, which means that which is referred to in passing judgement. This opinion is the least important view given by the exegetes (*mufasssirūn*).²²⁵

By comparison Q.31:2 and Q.43:4 have the same effect where the opinions of the exegetes focus on three meanings: *ḥikma*,²²⁶ *ḥākīm*²²⁷ and *muḥkam*.²²⁸ Al-Rāzī and al-Biqāʿī state that the technical meaning of the word *ḥākīm* is someone who is full of wisdom (*ḥikma*) and the Qur'ānic use of it is symbolic. The symbolic meaning is that the Qur'ān points to wisdom and what is right and thus it is likely that it refers to someone who is full of wisdom.²²⁹ Here, it can be supposed that the most important meaning of *ḥākīm* is “one who is wise” or “full of wisdom”, to which the other meanings are related.

²²¹ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 4/248; Ibn ʿAṭīyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 1/446; Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 2/499.

²²² Al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 1/464.

²²³ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 8/238; al-Biqāʿī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 3/412.

²²⁴ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 6/52-7; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 3/220; al-Shawkānī, *Faṭḥ al-qadīr*, 2/430.

²²⁵ Al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 3/220; al-Shawkānī, *Faṭḥ al-qadīr*, 2/430; Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 5/126; al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 8/238.

²²⁶ See for example Ibn ʿAṭīyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 4/345; al-Shawkānī, *Faṭḥ al-qadīr*, 4/226; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 11/65; al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3/474; al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 12/497.

²²⁷ See for example Ibn ʿAṭīyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 14/345; al-Shawkānī, *Faṭḥ al-qadīr*, 4/226; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 11/66.

²²⁸ See for example al-Shawkānī, *Faṭḥ al-qadīr*, 4/226; al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-maʿānī*, 11/66.

²²⁹ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 8/238; al-Biqāʿī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 3/412.

The discussion is incomplete if there is no analysis of the other derivative of the root *h-k-m* which becomes an attribute of the Qur'ān. This attribute derives from form IV of the verb *ḥakama*, that is *aḥkama*, and the attribute is *muḥkamāt* and *uḥkima*. This attribute maintains the original meaning of *ḥukm* as prevention.²³⁰ It occurs four times in four verses in the Qur'ān.

Example No.1:

The first example is Q.11:1, which reads:

Alīf-lām-rā. A Book, the verses whereof are perfected (*uḥkimat*), and then explained in detail from One Who is All-Wise, Well Acquainted.

The verb *uḥkimat* from *aḥkama*, which refers to perfection, is derived from the prevention of defect. In characterising itself, the Qur'ān uses the basic meaning of prevention. Thus, the Qur'ān is described as perfect, clear, well ordered, and free from defect and contradiction.²³¹ This characteristic shows the perfection of the Qur'ān as a divine revelation which is free from defect and contradiction.

The other examples are Q.3:7, Q.22:52 and Q.47:20. In discussing this attribute of the Qur'ān, the first two verses will be selected.²³²

²³⁰ The thesis focuses only on the meaning of these derivatives and does not attempt to examine in detail as this subject have been dealt with at length by many scholars. For example see Rahbar, *God of Justice*, 195-220.

²³¹ Cf. al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 8/465.

²³² Q.47:20 has the same result as with Q.3:7.

Examples Nos. 2 and 3:

It is He Who has sent down the Book to you. In it are verses that are entirely clear (*muḥkamāt*), they are foundations of the Book and others not entirely clear (*mutashābihāt*)... (Q.3:7)

Never did We send a Messenger or a Prophet before you but when he did recite [the revelation] Satan threw [some falsehood] in it. But Allah abolishes (*yansakh*) that which Satan throws in. Then Allah establishes (*yuhkim*) His revelations. And Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise. (Q.22:52)

In Q.3:7 *muḥkamāt* is the opposite of *mutashābih*. The latter can mean ambiguity or obscurity in the exact meaning of something, whereas the former means the clarity [soundness] of something which is easily understood. Therefore, its basic meaning of prevention suggests making something perfect, which leads to the idea of clarity and freedom from obscurity.

In Q.22:52, the verb *yuhkim* is a response to the verb *yansakh*, which in turn is a response to Satan's interference thwarted by God. Therefore *yuhkim*, is a further action by God. This presents two possibilities: establishment of the verses so as to prevent Satan from interfering with them; and preventing Satan's interference in the verses that are established.²³³ This brings *yuhkim* close to the basic meaning of *ḥukm*, that is, prevention, and so the meaning of establishment is used by the Qur'ān in response to *yansakh*.

From this discussion it is clear that God prevents the Qur'ān from having defects. This again shows the wisdom of God in revealing His words to His servant such that they are unable to challenge the wonder of the Qur'ān. This special characteristic of the Book makes it worthy of containing wisdom, which itself becomes its attributes as discussed before. The relationship between the two

²³³ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 9/178; al-Biqā'ī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 5/164.

derivatives of the verb *ḥakama* - *aḥkama* and *ḥakīm* - is demonstrated by this use in the Qur'ān.

3. *Ḥakīm* as an attribute of every matter decided by God

The word *ḥakīm* is also mentioned in the Qur'ān as the attribute of a matter (*amr*) decided by God. It occurs only once in Q.44:4, which reads:

Therein [that night] is decreed every 'wise' matter (*amr ḥakīm*).

According to the exegetes, this attribute can be interpreted in two ways:

1. *Muḥkam* in the sense of being decided by God,²³⁴ where this decision cannot be changed by anyone.²³⁵ This view is probably based on the preceding verse which states that on that blessed night (*layla mubāraka*) a specific decision will be made.
2. Possesses wisdom,²³⁶ which means that everything that God arranges on that night has wisdom.²³⁷

The verse says that the matter is decided on that night. Some exegetes say that the night referred to is *laylat al-qadr*.²³⁸ The verse implies that the matter is decided by God, and some exegetes suggest that it refers to the good, evil, life and death of every human.²³⁹ The attribute of the matter, *ḥakīm*, indeed refers to God for

²³⁴ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 11/223; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 5/414; al-Shawkānī, *Fath al-qadīr*, 4/547; Ibn 'Aṭīyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 5/69; al-Biqā'ī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 7/64.

²³⁵ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 13/112.

²³⁶ Al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*, 13/112.; al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 4/265.

²³⁷ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 14/141.

²³⁸ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 14/141; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 5/415.

²³⁹ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 14/141; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 5/415; al-Baghawī, *Ma'ālim*, 5/415.

it is invented by Him. As al-Rāzī suggests, it is a symbolic meaning (*majāz*)²⁴⁰ because the decision of God on the matter reflects His wisdom. God has perfect knowledge and knows exactly what to do. Once He has made a decision, it is final. Therefore, *ḥakīm* maintains two meanings of *ḥikma*: prevention and wisdom in the sense of “getting it right” (*iṣāba*). In this context *ḥakīm* is best interpreted as “wise” because that is the best general understanding of the word and shows the sense of perfection.

To sum up, the discussion on *ḥakīm* as an attribute focuses on God for He is the only one who has absolute wisdom. This is because the Qur’ān is the word of God and the matters are decided by God, and all of them are a manifestation of His wisdom. So according to the Qur’ān, the one who is the wisest is God, which is why it has never conferred this attribute on His creation.

D. Relationship between wisdom and power

This section will discuss the possibility of a relation between wisdom and power. Power here denotes authority, kingdom, high position and judgement. As shown above in the verses where *ḥikma* appears, it is evident that *ḥikma* is associated with *mulk*, which in turn denotes power, for example, Q.2:269. Wisdom is also necessary to obtain and maintain power. This relationship is also demonstrated in the verses containing *ḥukm*, for example, Q.45:16.²⁴¹ However, there are some exceptions in some of these verses where this relationship is not implied in the same verse but rather understood from the chronology of the verses. The story of the Prophet Yūsuf is a useful example of this relationship for analysis.

²⁴⁰ Al-Rāzī, *al-Kabīr*, 14/141.

²⁴¹ Compare with previous discussion, see above, p. 168.

Q.12:22 mentions granting *ḥukm* and *ʿilm* to Yūsuf. The best meaning for *ḥukm* here seems to be wisdom. Bearing other possibilities in mind, one could say that *ḥukm* here leads to prophethood (*nubuwwa*) and judgement (*qaḍāʾ*), and so wisdom is an essential element of prophethood and judgement. The story of Yūsuf describes the stages through which he passed from his childhood until his appointment as a minister with authority to control the finances of Egypt. This chronology is demonstrated in *Sūra Yūsuf*.

When Yūsuf was twelve years old he dreamed that eleven stars, a sun and a moon prostrated out of respect for him. His father told him not to reveal this dream to his brothers. Later he faced hostility from his brothers resulting from their envy of him. They planned to remove him far from their father's eyes. When his brothers obtained Yaʿqūb's permission to bring Yūsuf along with them, God inspired him: "And We revealed to him [at that time]: 'Indeed you shall inform them of this affair that which they do not know'" [Q.12:15]; here the verse refers to either prophethood or information (*ilhām*).²⁴² Eventually they managed to abandon Yūsuf alone in the well. Nevertheless, he was rescued and brought by the caravan to Egypt, where he was bought by a friend of the king of Egypt who took him to his home and asked his wife to take good care of him. The verse "And thus We established Yūsuf in the land so that we might teach him the interpretation of the events" [Q.12:21] refers to Yūsuf's residence in the palace. When he reached maturity there God granted him wisdom (*ḥukm*) and knowledge (*ʿilm*), and the verse states that this was a reward for his goodness [Q.12:22]. Some exegetes define the goodness as his patience during the trouble that his brothers had caused.²⁴³ After this reference by the Qur'ān, many

²⁴² Al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 3/354.

²⁴³ For example, see al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-tawīl*, 3/359.

important events happened to Yūsuf. The minister's wife tried to seduce him but he managed to escape. Then he chose to be imprisoned where he delivered the message and interpreted the dreams of two men. He was asked to interpret the king's dream, which brought about his release from prison. He then was appointed as a minister in charge of Egypt's fineness, where he exercised full authority (*Qāla j-^calnī ^calā khazā'ini al-arḍi innī ḥafīẓun ^calīm. Wa-kadhālika makkannā li-Yūsufa fī-l-arḍi yatabawwa'u fī-hā ḥaythu yashā'*) [Q.12:55,56].

From the summary of the story of Yūsuf as told in the Qur'ān, he clearly received wisdom while he was in the palace. There is no conclusive agreement regarding the time of his appointment as prophet. However, it is certain that he probably became a prophet before he was imprisoned, since the Qur'ān narrates his conveying of the religious message in the prison [Q.12:37-40]. Therefore, wisdom in this context alludes to prophethood. If the story is studied carefully, it shows that wisdom is an essential element which brought Yūsuf close to the king, who eventually gave him the authority to control the country's finance. Wisdom is also considered important in judgement, when Yūsuf is described as giving his judgement in the case of smuggling in which his brothers were implicated: "So he [Yūsuf] began [the search] in their bags before the bag of his brother" [Q.12:76]. This shows that wisdom is a prerequisite of holding an important position. It can be said also that wisdom is important in enabling someone to possess authority. Q.12:101 narrates Yūsuf announcement of God's proclamation of authority to him. The proclamation happened after his father and his brothers were united:

My Lord! You have indeed bestowed on me of the sovereignty (*mulk*), [that is authority], and taught me something of the interpretation of dreams - the [Only] Creator of the heavens and the earth! You are my Protector (*Walī*) in this world and in the Hereafter. Cause me to die as a Muslim, and join me with the righteous.

This clearly highlights the importance of wisdom in the story of Yūsuf, for it finally raised him to the high position beside the king of Egypt.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has shown that, basically, the verb *ḥakama* means “to judge.” The exegetes have no problem in interpreting the verb. However, the difficulty arises when the verbal noun, *ḥukm*, appears to mean “wisdom.” With regard to this, disagreement occurs among exegetes as to whether the word means “wisdom” or “judgement.” We have argued here that the word is better taken to mean “wisdom.”

Chapter One, which discusses judgement by God, shows the verb *ḥakama* as meaning “to judge.” It involves God’s decision and legal judgement. However, the context of the verses also suggests that *ḥakama* can mean “to rule” and that its verbal noun, *ḥukm*, can mean authority.

God’s judgement and His authority are shared by other terms such as *qaḍā*, *faṣl*, *mulk*, *taṣarruf* and *mashīa*. This shows that both are not only features of *ḥukm* but are prevalent concepts throughout the Qur’ān. The Qur’ān reiterates in the framework of *ḥukm* that absolute judgement and authority belong to God, showing His right of command. The Qur’ān not only states that God has a prerogative to determine the values that men should adopt but also suggests some elements, i.e. knowledge, power and wisdom, that must be incorporated into judgement and authority to make them effective, since God is described as Knowing, Powerful and Wise.

Chapter One also shows that judgement by God occurs in both this world and the Hereafter. His judgement in this world generally concerns the laws that man should adopt, while His judgement in the Hereafter concerns His reward and punishment. Belief in God’s judgement means belief in His supremacy over the universe and that divine judgement governs human conduct. This means that

Muslims should not only believe in God but they must believe in Him as the Lord and Master of the universe whose command and dictate governs their whole life. His judgement not only refers to His decision but also includes regulations that He sets for man.

Chapter Two discusses judgement by those other than God. It shows two different attitudes, positive and negative. "Positive" refers to what is in conformity with God's decision and with justice. "Negative" refers to what is not in conformity with that.

Judgement by others shows two meanings of *ḥukm*. The first is general judgement which includes decision and legal judgement. The second is authority, is a meaning that can be derived from the context. Since judgement by others must comply with judgement by God, this also indicates God's superiority over others.

The chapter also shows that God's judgement is displayed in the so-called *shirʿa* or *sharīʿa* introduced by the Qurʾān to show His judgement for men. The Qurʾān gives no choice other than to follow the *sharīʿa* of God. Thus, following any other path is conceptualised as *jāhiliyya* and submission to *ṭāghūt*.

The *ḥukm* of God is conveyed to man through His messengers who receive it through revelation. After the death of the messengers the only original source that preserves the *ḥukm* of God is the Divine Book. The verses dealt with here show that the implementation of the *ḥukm* of God can be achieved through authority, which implies "political authority", as the *ḥukm* of God governs the affairs of human society. The Meccan verses approach this from two angles: the first emphasises the authority of God which enables Him to pronounce regulations to man; the second refers to the authority of the Prophet Dāwūd, whose authority includes adjudication. The Medinan verses, besides referring to judgement by God, also include reference to

judgement by others, in particular the Prophet Muḥammad. The Prophet did not possess authority in the Meccan period but he did possess authority when he moved to Medina. The Medinan verses talk about judgement by the Prophet. The verses are concerned not only with adjudication, but rather raise it as one aspect of the Prophet's ruling authority. In other words, the Prophet, as a ruler in Medina, practised adjudication as one aspect of his ruling.

The Medinan verses indicate that the community, in particular the Muslims, are ordered to submit fully to the Prophet; since he took charge of their outward affairs this authority relates to political authority. This is not only understood from the historical background but also from the contextual use of the root *ḥ-k-m* as presented by Q.4:58 and Q.4:65.¹ Thus, *ḥukm* not only means judgement but also, from the context, means authority. This authority is not initiated by the Prophet but was given by God to the Prophet who used it to apply the *sharīʿa* of God, which is referred to as "what God has sent down".

The Qurānic framework of *ḥukm* also raises the idea of two elements of society, the rulers and the ruled. The first possess the authority to enforce justice and implement the *sharīʿa*, and the ruled must follow them. Authority is not created by them but is entrusted to them by God. The obedience that the ruled should give to the ruler is neither due to a command from the ruler nor from the ruled; rather it is a command from God. Thus, authority in the political order of society is religious. However, it is not absolute since absolute authority belongs only to God. This does not mean that men have no political functions, but in cases where there is a clear scriptural text there should be no compromise.

¹ See above, pp. 96-9.

In the context of the enforcement of the *ḥukm* of God, the main objective is to ensure justice. Thus adjudication must be based on truth, justice and the *ḥukm* of God. The Prophet Dāwūd is commanded to judge with truth as described in a Meccan verse, and, in Medinan verses, the believers together with the Prophet Muḥammad are commanded to judge with justice, as in *Sūrat al-Nisā'*. The Prophet Muḥammad is commanded to judge "with justice", as in one verse in *Sūrat al-Mā'ida*, and with the *ḥukm* of God in another verse in the same *sūra*. Truth, justice and the *ḥukm* of God are interdependent. Justice is the aim of judicial judgement and this judgement must be based on truth so that justice can be exercised. However, the best way to ensure justice is by the *ḥukm* of God, namely the *sharīʿa* which is expressed by "what God has sent down." This is because the *sharīʿa* comes from God, the All-Knowing and the Wise, whose judgement raises no questions of validity and suitability. Hence, the function of *sharīʿa* is to ensure justice making divine revelation a unique source of legislation. Once God has ruled on a certain issue, there is no longer room for human speculation or sophistry.²

Nevertheless, men are in need of something in order to enable them to understand Qur'ānic teachings and these teachings include understanding of the *ḥukm* contained in the Qur'ān. They also need an element that enables them to possess the authority needed to apply the *sharīʿa*. In both cases this element is wisdom, which is the other important technical meaning of *ḥukm* in the Qur'ān. The Qur'ān uses two nouns for wisdom: *ḥukm* and *ḥikma*. The former occurs more frequently in the Meccan period whereas the latter is the concern of the Medinan period. The relevant Qur'ānic verses also show that though both the Qur'ān and "every matter" are

² Al-Ghazālī, Muḥammad, *A Thematic Commentary on the Qur'ān*, 1/94.

described as wise, both in fact indicate the wisdom of God. Furthermore, both the Qur'ān and "every matter" come from God. Though men are given wisdom, they are not described as wise. This implies the perfection of God's wisdom and His greatness. Wisdom, which includes understanding and knowledge, is the main requirement for those involved in judicial affairs as well as in political activity and it shows them the right way of action. This is not its only function, as wisdom is also a manifestation of belief since men must believe that wisdom is conferred on them by God. God is the Wisest and thus His judgement is based on His wisdom. The revelation is not only the wisdom of God, but it is important as one of the sources from which men obtain wisdom. Thus, the Qur'ān is described as being full of wisdom. Delivering wisdom is the task of the Prophet and this shows that Islam is a religion of wisdom, giving it high regard. Being a wise religion, it contains what is suitable and practical to men in this life.

In short, *ḥukm* in the Qur'ān involves a concept of belief in God which demands not only an acknowledgement of the sovereignty of God and His ruling over the universe, but also that the order of society must demonstrate this belief. Thus justice and the *sharī'ah* must be applied. Justice is not only a basis of judgement; rather, it is a basis of the political activity which also governs human affairs. Justice here reflects a concept of social justice since it involves the element of the ruled and not only the ruler.³ Thus, Islam is not only a religion of ritual but is also a socio-political and theological religion which governs the affairs of men. The Qur'ānic framework presents the idea of political activity which is related to the society of

³ One of the definitions of social justice is that each member of society takes his right without harming the right of others. See al-Nabhān, *Nizām al-ḥukm*, 222.

man.⁴ The Qur'ān also reforms the practice of enforcing the law. It gives authority to jurisdiction and thus the society must accept the judgement given by the judge.

Hence, from this study we would disagree with 'Amāra when he says that "most of the Qur'ānic use of the root *h-k-m* signifies judgement and wisdom and has no relation to caliphate, leadership or political concepts."⁵ We also disagree with his statement about the effect of Q.5:44, 45 and 47 which he believes is only to be applied to the people of the Book and not to Muslims.⁶ 'Amāra's view in our understanding is based on his "disagreement with the increasingly vociferous individuals, groups, parties and organisations who claim to speak for Islam and who call for the establishment of an Islamic state."⁷ In our view, even if he disagrees with them he should not deny the possibility of *ḥukm* denoting authority. In the same way we disagree with Ayubi who says that "political Islam is a new invention [which] does not represent a going back to any situation that existed in the past or to any theory that was formulated in the past."⁸ He also says: "...although Islam is a religion of collective morals, it is not particularly a political religion."⁹ Our researches show that these views do not accord with the verses in which the root

⁴ Politics refers to: the art and science of government; public life and affairs as involving authority and government; and activities concerned with the acquisition or exercise of authority or government. See Thompson, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English*, 1057. The Arabic word for politics is *siyāsa*. It means to be in charge of something and to work for its well-being. See *Tahdhīb al-Lisān*, 1/637; Khallāf, 'Abd al-Wahhāb, *al-Siyāsa al-shar'īyya*, 5.

⁵ 'Amāra, *al-Dawla al-Islāmiyya Bayna l-'Ilmāniyya wa-l-Sulṭa al-Diniyya*, 35.

⁶ Ibid., 45.

⁷ Boullata, Issa J., *Trends and Issues in Contemporary Arab Thought*, 77.

⁸ Ayubi, *Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Arab World*, 3.

⁹ Ibid., 120.

h-k-m occurs. Correspondingly, we would also suggest that those who say that the root denotes authority should expand their argument further.¹⁰

On the other hand, the Qur'ānic framework of *ḥukm* does not refer to any specific political structure. It is left to the society to decide the structure, provided that this is based on the two elements of justice and the *sharīʿa*. In other words, the society must believe in the sovereignty and authority of God.

Endnote

The Qur'ānic framework of *ḥukm* does not give a complete picture of the subjects discussed in this thesis, namely judgement, authority and wisdom. To gain a more comprehensive and fairer picture, each subject would have to be dealt with at length by comparing the ideas that derive from *ḥukm* with the ideas that derive from the other terms related to the subject. For example, to get a clearer picture of the concept of judgement, besides studying the ideas that derive from *ḥukm*, the ideas that derive from related terms such as *qaḍā'* and *faṣl* would have to be incorporated. Similarly if we accept that *ḥukm* denotes political authority, other ideas that derive from related terms implying political authority, such as *umma* and *shūrā*, should not be ignored. It is clear therefore that this thesis is but a beginning, and there is much further research which needs to be done in order to gain a full understanding of the concepts associated with the word *ḥukm* in the Qur'ān.

¹⁰ These writers include those mentioned early in the introduction of the thesis. See above, p. 2, fn. 2. They refer to the relevant verses without further elaboration, leaving the debate open for those who hold the opposite view.

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ABBREVIATIONS

PRIMARY SOURCES

Abū Ḥayyān al-Andalusī, Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, ed. °Ādil Aḥmad °Abd al-Mawjūd, °Alī Muḥammad Mu°awwad, Zakariyya °Abd al-Majīd al-Nūnī, Aḥmad al-Najwalī al-Jamal, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-°Ilmiyya, 9 vols., 1993

Abū al-Su°ūd, Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Muṣṭafā, *Irshād al-°aql al-salīm ilā mizāyā al-kitāb al-karīm*, Egypt: Dār al-Fikr, 5 vols., n.d. = *Irshād*

Abū Dāwūd, Sulaymān ibn al-Ash°ath al-Sijistānī, *Sunan*, ed. Muḥammad Muḥyī al-Dīn °Abd al-Ḥamīd, Dār Iḥyā' al-Sunna al-Nabawiyya, 4 vols. in two, n.p., n.d.

Abū Ya°lā, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Farrā' al-Ḥanbalī, *al-Aḥkām al-sulṭāniyya*, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-°Ilmiyya, ed. Muḥammad Ḥāmid al-Fīqī, 1983

Alūsī, Abū Faḍl Shihāb al-Dīn al, *Rūḥ al-ma°ānī fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-°azīm wa-l-sab° al-mathānī*, ed. °Alī °Abd al-Bārī °Aṭiyya, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-°Ilmiyya, 16 vols., 1994 = *Rūḥ al-ma°ānī*

Bayḍāwī, Nāṣir al-Dīn Abū Sa°id °Abd Allah al, *Asrār al-tanzīl wa asrār al-ta'wīl*, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-°Ilmiyya, 2 vols., 1988 = *Asrār al-tanzīl*

Biqā°ī, Burhān al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥasan Ibrāhīm ibn °Umar al, *Naẓm al-durar fī tanāsuh al-āyāt wa-l-suwar*, ed. by °Abd al-Razzāq Ghālib al-Mahdī, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-°Ilmiyya, 8 vols., 1995 = *Naẓm al-durar*

Bukhārī, Muḥammad ibn Ismā°īl ibn Ibrāhīm al, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, printed with al-Sanadī, Abū al-Ḥasan Nūr al-Dīn, 4 vols. in two, Cairo: Maktaba wa Maṭba°a Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī wa Awlāduh, last edn, 1953

Fīrūzābādī, Majd al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Ya°qūb al, *al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ*, Beirut: Dār al-Jayl, 4 vols. in two, n.d.

Ibn Abī al-Dam, Shihāb al-Dīn Ibrāhīm ibn ʿAbd Allah, *Kitāb adab al-qaḍāʾ aw al-durar al-manẓūmāt fī-l-aqḍiya wa-l-ḥukūmāt*, ed. Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Qādir ʿAṭā, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, first edition, 1987 = *Adab al-qaḍāʾ*

Ibn al-ʿArabī, Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allah, *Aḥkām al-Qurʾān*, ed. ʿAbd al-Qādir Muḥammad ʿAṭā, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, n.d.

Ibn ʿAṭiyya al-Andalusī, Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq ibn Ghālib, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz fī tafsīr al-kitāb al-ʿazīz*, edited ʿAbd al-Salām ʿAbd al-Shāfi Muḥammad, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 6 vols., 1993 = *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*

Ibn Farḥūn, Burhān al-Dīn Abū al-Wafāʾ Ibrāhīm, *Tabṣirat al-ḥukkām fī uṣūl al-aqḍiyya wa manāḥij al-aḥkām*, ed. Jamāl Marʿashalī (?), Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2 vols. in one, 1995 = *Tabṣirat al-ḥukkām*

Ibn Kathīr, Ismāʿīl al-Qurashī al-Dimashqī, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ʿazīm*, Beirut: Dār al-Maʿārif, 4 vols., 1969 = *Tafsīr*

Ibn Mājah, Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Yazīd al-Qazwīnī, *Sunan*, ed. Muḥammad Fuʾād ʿAbd al-Bāqī, Cairo: ʾIsā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī wa shurakāh, 2 vols., n.d.

Ibn Manẓūr al-Ifriqī, Abū Faḍl Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Mukarram, *Lisān al-ʿarab*, Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 15 vols., n.d.

_____, *Lisān al-lisān: tahdhīb lisān al-ʿarab*, revd. ʿAbd Allah ʿAlī Mahanā, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2 vols., 1993 = *Tahdhīb al-lisān*

Khāzin, ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Baghdādī al, *Lubāb al-taʾwīl fī maʿānī al-tanzīl*, = *Lubāb al-taʾwīl*, printed with of Baghawī, Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn ibn Masʿūd al-Farrāʾ al, *Maʿālim al-tanzīl*, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 6 vols., 1995 = *Maʿālim*

- Lane, Edward William, *An Arabic-English Lexicon: Derived From the Best and the Most Copious Eastern Sources*, 8 vols. London: Williams and Norgate, 1863-1893 (lithographic reprint, 2 vols., Cambridge: The Islamic Text Society Trust, 1984) = *Lexicon*
- Maḥallī, Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al and Suyūfī, Jalāl al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Abī Bakr al, *Tafsīr al-jalālayn*, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, n.d. = *Tafsīr*
- Mawardī, Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥabīb al, *al-Aḥkām al-sulṭāniyya*, ed. ʿAbd al-Raḥman ʿUmayra, Cairo: Dār al-ʿItisām, 2 vols., 1994
- Muslim, Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, 8 vols. in four, 1987
- Nasafī, ʿAbd Allah ibn Aḥmad ibn Maḥmūd al, *Tafsīr al-nasafī*, Cairo: Mūsā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī wa Shurakāh, 4 vols. in two, n.d. = *Tafsīr*
- Nīsābūrī, Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn Aḥmad al-Wāḥidī al, *Asbāb al-nuzūl*, ed. al-Sayyid al-Jumaylī, Cairo: Dār al-Rayyān li-l-Turāth, n.d.
- Qurṭubī, Abū ʿAbd Allah Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al, *al-Jāmiʿ li-aḥkām al-Qurʾān*, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 11 vols., 1988 = *al-Jāmiʿ*
- Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, Abū al-Qāsim al-Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad, *al-Mufradāt fī gharīb al-Qurʾān*, ed. Muḥammad Sayyid Kīlānī, Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifa, n.d. = *al-Mufradāt*
- Rāzī, Fakhr al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ʿUmar al, *Mafāṭīḥ al-ghayb aw al-tafsīr al-kabīr*, Cairo: Dār al-Ghad al-ʿArabī, 16 vols., 1991 = *al-Kabīr*
- Sakandarī, ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allah al, *al-Ḥikam*, ed. Aḥmad ʿIzz al-Dīn ʿAbd Allah, Egypt: al-Maktaba al-Azhariyya li-l-Turāth, n.d.
- Shāfiʿī, Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al, *al-Risāla*, ed. Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākīr, Cairo: Maktabah Dār al-Turāth, 2nd. edn, 1979

Shawkānī, Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad al, *Faṭḥ al-qadīr al-jāmiʿ bayn fannay al-riwāya wa-l-dirāya min ʿilm al-tafsīr*, ed. ʿAbd al-Raḥman ʿUmayra, al-Manṣura (Egypt): Dār al-Wafāʾ, 6 vols., 1994 = *Faṭḥ al-qadīr*

Suyūṭī, Jalāl al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Abī Bakr al, *al-Itqān fī ʿulūm al-Qurʾān*, ed. Muḥamad Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm, Cairo: *Maktabah wa maṭbaʿa al-Mashhad al-Husaynī*, 2 vols., 1967

Ṭabarī, Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān fī taʾwīl al-Qurʾān*, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 12 vols., 1992 = *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*

Tirmidhī, Abū ʿĪsā Muḥammad ibn ʿĪsā ibn Sūra al, *al-Jāmiʿ al-ṣaḥīḥ*, ed. ʿAbd al-Waḥhāb ʿAbd al-Laṭīf, Medina: al-Maktaba al-Salafiyya, 5 vols., 2nd. edn, 1974

Zamakhsharī, Abū al-Qāsim al, *al-Kashshāf ʿan ḥaqāʾiq ghawāmiḍ al-tanzīl wa ʿuyūn al-aqāwīl fī wujūh al-taʾwīl*, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 4 vols., 1995 = *al-Kashshāf*

Zarkashī, Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allah al, *al-Burhān fī ʿulūm al-Qurʾān*, ed. Muḥamad Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm, Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifa, 4 vols., n.d.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Abdel Haleem, Muhammad, *Understanding The Qur'an: Themes and Style*, London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1999.

Abdul Raouf, Muḥammad, *Studies in the Qurʾānic Concept of Sins*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1963 = *Concept of Sins*

ʿAbd al-Tawwāb, Muḥammad, *al-Dawla al-Islāmiyya ka-mā yuṣawwiruhā al-Qurʾān al-karīm*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of al-Azhar, 1987 = *al-Dawla al-Islāmiyya*

- Aḥmed, Manzooruddin, "Key Political Concept in the Qur'an" in *Islamic Studies* 10:2, 1971, 77-102
- ʿAjlānī, Munīr al, *ʿAbqariyyat al-Islām fī uṣūl al-ḥukm*, Beirut: Dār al-Nafā'is, 2nd. edn, 1988 = *ʿAbqariyyat al-Islām*
- ʿAmāra, Muḥammad, *al-Dawla al-Islāmiyya bayna l-ʿilmāniyya wa-l-sulṭa al-diniyya*, Beirut: Dār al-Shurūq, 1988 = *al-Dawla al-Islāmiyya*
- Amīn, Aḥmad, *al-Jāhiliyya qadīman wa ḥadithan*, Kuwait: Shirka al-Shaʿāʿ li-l-Nashr, n.d.
- Anawati, G.C., "Faṣl", in *The Encyclopaedia of Islām*, Leiden: E.J. Brill Ltd, New Edition, 1965, 2/836-7 = *E.I.*²
- Arberry, A.J., "Synonyms and Homonyms in the Qur'ān", in *Islamic Quarterly* 13, 1969, 135-9
- Arnold, Thomas W., *The Caliphate*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1924
- Arnold, Thomas W., Guillaume, Alfred, *The Legacy of Islam*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1931
- Ayubi, Nazih, *Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Arab World*, London: Routledge, 1994
- Boullata, Issa J., *Trend and Issues in Contemporary Arab Thought*, New York: State University of New York Press, 1990
- Calder, N., "Sharīʿa" in *The Encyclopaedia of Islām*, Leiden: E.J. Brill Ltd, New Edition, 1997, 9/321-6 = *E.I.*²
- Depanle, J., "Sharīʿa" in *The Encyclopaedia of Islām*, Leiden: E.J. Brill Ltd, New Edition, 1997, 9/320-1 = *E.I.*²
- Djebli, Moktar, "Taḥkīm" in *The Encyclopaedia of Islām*, Leiden: E. J. Brill Ltd, New Edition, 1998, 10/107-8.

- Esposito, John L., *Islam The Straight Path*, New York: Oxford University Press, 3rd. edn, 1998
- Gardet, L., "Qadar" in *The Encyclopaedia of Islām*, Leiden: E.J. Brill Ltd, New Edition, 1978, 4/365-7 = *E.I*²
- Ghazālī, Muḥammad al, *A Thematic Commentary on the Qur'ān*, trans. ʿĀshūr A. Shāmis, Herndon, VA: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, vol. 1, n.d.
- Goichon, A.-M., "Ḥukm", in *The Encyclopaedia of Islām*, Leiden: E.J. Brill Ltd, New Edition, 1971, 3/549 = *E.I*²
- _____, "Ḥikma" in *The Encyclopaedia of Islām*, Leiden: E.J. Brill Ltd, New Edition, 1971, 3/377-8 = *E.I*²
- Goldziher, Ignaz, *Muslim Studies*, trans. from *Muhamedanische Studien* by C.R. Barber and S.M. Stern, ed. S.M. Stern, London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, vol. 1, 1967
- Hārūn, ʿAbd al-Salām, *al-Muʿjam al-wasīf*, Cairo: Majmaʿ al-Lugha al-ʿArabiyya, 2 vols., 1960
- Ḥasanayn, ʿAlī Muḥammad, *Riqābat al-umma ʿalā al-ḥukkām: dirāsa muqārina bayna l-sharʿa wa nuẓum al-ḥukm al-waḍʿiyya*, Riyāḍ: Maktaba al-Khānī, 1988 = *Riqābat al-umma*
- Huart, L., "ʿAdl" in *The Encyclopaedia of Islām*, Leiden: E.J. Brill Ltd, First Edition, 1913, 1/142 = *E.I*¹
- Izutsu, Thoshihiko, *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'ān*, Montreal: McGill University Press, 1966 = *Ethico-Religious Concepts*
- _____, *God and Man in the Koran*, Tokyo: The Keio Institute of Cultural and Linguistic Studies, 1964 = *God and Man*

- Kaldy, G.Y., "Qaḍā" in *The Encyclopaedia of Islām*, Leiden: E.J. Brill Ltd, New Edition, 1978, 4/364-5 = *E.I*²
- Kamali, Mohd Hashim, "The Limit of Power in An Islamic State" in *Islamic Studies*, 28:4, 1989, 323-354
- Khalīl, ʿĀrif, *Niẓām al-ḥukm fī-l-Islām*, Jordan: Dār al-Nafā'is, 1996 = *Niẓām al-ḥukm*
- Khallāf, ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿiyya*, Beirut: Mu'assat al-Risāla, 1987, 3rd. edn, 1987
- Lambton, Ann K.S., *State and Government in Medieval Islam: An Introduction to the Study of Islamic Political Theory; the Jurists*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981
- Lewis, Bernard, *The Political Language of Islam*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988
- _____, "Ḥukūma", in *The Encyclopaedia of Islām*, Leiden: E.J. Brill Ltd, New Edition, 1971, 3/551-2 = *E.I*²
- MacDonald, Duncan B., *Development of Muslim Theology, Jurisprudence and Constitutional Theory*, London: George Routledge & Sons Limited, 1903
- Nabhān, Muḥammad Fārūq al, *Niẓām al-ḥukm fī-l-Islām*, Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risāla, second edition, 1988 = *Niẓām al-ḥukm*
- Plessner, M., "Mulk" in *The Encyclopaedia of Islām*, Leiden: E. J. Brill Ltd, New Edition, 1993, 7/546-7 = *E.I*²
- Pines, S., "Amr" in *The Encyclopaedia of Islām*, Leiden: E. J. Brill Ltd, New Edition, 1960, 1/449-50 = *E.I*²
- Qāḍi Wadād al, "The Term 'Khalīfa' in Early Exegetical Literature", in *Die Welt des Islams* 28 (1988), 392-411

Qaraḍāwī, Yūsuf al, *Min fiqh al-dawla fī-l-Islām*, Beirut: Dār al-Shurūq, 1997

Quṭb, Sayyid, *Fī ḡilāl al-Qur'ān*, Beirut: Dār al-Shurūq, 13th edn, 1987 = *ḡilāl*

Rahbar, Daud, *God of Justice*, Ph.D. thesis, The University of Cambridge, 1953, published in Leiden: E. J. Brill Ltd, 1960

Riḍā, Muḥammad Rashīd, *Tafsīr al-Manār*, Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifa, 1993 = *al-Manār*

Rosenthal, Franz, *Knowledge Triumphant: The Concept of Knowledge in Medieval Islam*, Leiden: E. J. Brill Ltd, 1970

Schacht, Joseph, *An Introduction To Islamic Law*, London: Oxford University Press, 1964

_____, "Aḥkām" in *The Encyclopaedia of Islām*, Leiden: E. J. Brill Ltd, new edition, 1/257

Shamma, S.H. al, *The Ethical System Underlying The Qur'ān*, Ph.D. thesis, The University of Edinburgh, 1959 = *The Ethical System*

Shams al-Dīn, Muḥammad Mahdī, *Bayn al-jāhiliyya wa-l-Islām*, Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-Lubnānī, 1975

Thompson, Della, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 9th edn, 1996

Tyan, E., "Ḥakam", in *The Encyclopaedia of Islām*, Leiden: E. J. Brill Ltd, new edition, 1971, 3/72 = *E.I*²

Wansbrough, John, *Quranic Studies: Sources and Methods of Scriptural Interpretation*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977

Wehr, Hans, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, ed. Cowan, J Milton, London: Macdonald & Evans Ltd., 3rd printing, 1974

Ulyān, Shawkat Muḥammad, *al-Sulṭa al-qadā'iyya fī-l-Islām: dirāsa mawḍū'iyya Muqarina*, Riyāḍ: Dār al-Rashīd, 1982 = *al-Sulṭa al-qadā'iyya*

Zuḥaylī, Wahba al, *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr al-Mu'āṣir, 32 vols. in sixteen, 1991 = *Tafsīr*

_____, *al-Fiqh al-Islāmī wa adillatuh*, Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 8 vols., 3rd edn, 1989